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OUR NATIONAL RELIGION.

How many quires have been filled with glowing descriptions of the already acquired greatness, and prospective glory of the Young Republic of North America! How many writers have vied with each other, in attempting to delineate in appropriate colors, the extent, fertility and natural beauties of her vast territory, and to exhibit in adequate numbers the sum of her agricultural wealth, and rich, ever expanding mineral and commercial resources! How many volumes might be gathered, if all that loving enthusiastic hearts, and admiring minds, have spoken and written, in the patriotic oration, the thoughtful essay, or the racy narrative, could be found and rescued from the must and moth! And yet the tithe of the reality has not been told. Although the subject has been the theme of many of the liveliest imaginations, and ablest pens, and much that was even wild and hyperbolic has been spoken and written upon it, no adequate conception of what our country really is, much less of what she promises to be, has yet been formed. The tithe of it has not been thought. Indeed the tenth of it has not yet had time to develop itself. Many even of our keenest-eyed Statesmen, though occupying a position commanding by its height a far-reaching view, have but recently begun to comprehend the ter-

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ritorial interests involved in the millions upon millions of acres of unoccupied, unexplored land, included in our national possessions. Even when facts are numerically or statistically known, it requires time before proper conceptions of them are formed in the mind. But if this is true in reference merely to the pecuniary interests involved in the territorial extent of the country, how much more imperfect must be the prevailing conception of other and higher interests claiming consideration in a case like this! Who shall say or who shall conceive, what will be the actual wealth, the political power, the national influence of Our Country, when all the latent resources and treasures of its timbered hills, and verdant valleys, its mountains of iron, coal, and copper, its lakes of salt, and rivers of gold, shall be fairly brought out, and be fully developed! And still more who shall conceive the actual state and position of our country, as well within itself, as in its relations to the rest of the world, when the *latent intellectual and moral resources*, of minds and hearts, moulded amid scenes and by circumstances like those existing and abounding here, shall approximate toward their proper development!

No wonder that earnest and thoughtful men, have gazed upon the solemn prospect, which the contemplation of such a future opens, with trembling bewilderment. The narrowest secular considerations involved in the case, may well create profound concern. It requires no keen prophetic vision to foresee, that a Government holding control over such vast interests, must speedily acquire an amount of political and moral influence, far surpassing what has ever been possessed by any other secular power; that the day is rapidly approaching, when, humanly speaking, the political and social system of our country, will be the mind and heart of the world, and when the pulse that beats here, will thrill through all the arteries of the Race.

And who that has the faintest conceptions of this, can be indifferent to the *character* of the unlimited influence, which will then be possessed and exerted? Who that has the prosperity of his country, the welfare of society, and the glory of God at heart, can regard with unconcern the elements which are now daily mingling, more and more freely, in the production of this influence? Above all, who that knows how indispensable correct religious principles are to its purity, and how hopelessly and potentially pernicious it must be without them, can be else than anxious to know whether such principles have been mingling in due proportion with other formative elements, and to what extent they are likely to do so in the future? Are these principles the salt of every social system, and shall we not care to know

whether they be found in sufficient measure in our's, to secure it against speedy corruption and dissolution? Are they the light of the body social, and shall it not matter to us, whether the system with which we and our children are so closely bound up, is moving onward, like a huge growing Polyphemus, blindly and madly to a destruction the more terrible because so vast?

Right heartily do we believe, and as frankly confess the conviction, that in these latter times no Government can long maintain its integrity, or prosper even in so far as to afford quiet and peaceful homes to its citizens, unless it be based upon the conservative principles of Christianity, and in its general movements yield respect and conformity thereto. Rome might rise and flourish for a thousand years, though based upon a Pagan foundation, and propped by the pillars of heathen politics and philosophy. "The times of that ignorance God winked at." But it is a vain, not to say profane, hope, if any proudly and atheistically indulge it, that such prosperity may be repeated in a similar form, by the American Republic.

It is with these convictions that we are led to inquire into *the relation existing between our Civil Government and Religion*. Does our National Constitution, do our State Constitutions take any cognizance at all of Religion? Do they seem to be aware of the existence of religious principles, and religious systems, in the world around, and in their own midst; and do they seem willing at all, to show favor to any particular system of Religion, or set of religious principles, in manifest preference to others? Or is every reference of this sort scrupulously avoided, and conscientiously excluded? As far as the general Constitutions, and special laws of the land are concerned, are they throughout, rigidly neutral and impartial—quite as favorable to Turks and Hottentots, as to the most devout and zealous christians?

These questions will indicate the subject and aim of the present essay. And the consideration of them must awaken the deeper interest, at least in christian minds, in view of the fact that from the days of Jefferson onward, not a few have answered the first two with a most earnest and unequivocal negative, and the last two with an equally decided affirmative.

Whatever may have been his real views and motives, Jefferson already avowed it as his conviction that "our laws apply the only antidote to the vice (of sectarian intolerance), by placing all religions (Jewish, Pagan, Mohammedan) on an equal footing." That so obsequious and ambitious a politician as Jefferson, and one whose sympathies with the masses were so sickly and selfish, should indulge rather freely in rhetoric like this,

when writing to an Israelite, explains itself. But there is little doubt that his religious liberalism would predispose him to cherish such a sentiment, as his hearty conviction. And no one will deny that its source has given it weight. Of this we find proof indeed in the fact that he is so frequently appealed to as authority, and that his opinion is considered by many as decisive.

This is the opinion upon which the famous *Sunday Mails* Report of 1829 is based. The prayer of the petitioners was denied mainly upon the ground, that the Congress of the United States have nothing to do with questions involving Religion, and therefore could not interfere on the behalf of those who made the application in the case. Some of the sentiments set forth in that notable document, in vindication and illustration of this view, are so remarkable that we may be allowed to quote them.

After stating in an introductory paragraph that the principle upon which the National Legislature suspends all public business upon one day in seven, is strictly one of political expediency, based upon purely natural laws, and sanctioned by the usage of all nations, (not even excepting the Chinese?), the Report proceeds: "It should, however, be kept in mind, that the proper object of Government, is to protect all persons in the enjoyment of their religious, as well as civil rights; and not to determine, for any, whether they shall esteem one day above another, or esteem all days alike." (By this was evidently meant, not simply that Government should not suffer itself to become committed to any particular opinion relatively to a day of religious worship, but rather that it had no right to give special countenance to any form of religious opinion, or any set of religious views, whatever. The Report then proceeds): "We are aware that a variety of sentiment exists among the good citizens of this nation, on the subject of the Sabbath day; and our Government is designed for the protection of one, as much as for another."

\* \* \* With these different religious views, the committee are of opinion that Congress cannot interfere. It is not the legitimate province of the Legislature to determine what religion is true or false. Our government is a civil, and not a religious institution. Our constitution recognizes in every person, the right to choose his own religion, and to enjoy it freely, without molestation. Whatever may be the religious sentiments of citizens, and however variant, they are alike entitled to protection from the Government, so long as they do not invade the rights of others. \* \* \* Should congress in their legislative capacity, adopt the sentiment, (that the first day of the week should be



kept sacred) it would establish the principle, that the legislature is a proper tribunal to determine what are the laws of God. It would involve a legislative decision in a religious controversy, \* \* \*. If this principle is once introduced, it will be impossible to define its bounds. Among all the religious persecutions, with which almost every page of modern history is stained, no victim ever suffered, but for the violation of what government denominated the law of God. To prevent a similar train of evils in this country, the constitution has wisely withheld from our Government the power of defining the divine law. It is a right reserved to each citizen; and while he respects the equal rights of others, he cannot be held amenable to any human tribunal for his conclusions," \* \* \* \* \*

"If the principle is once established, that religion or religious observances shall be interwoven with our legislative acts, we must pursue it to its ultimatum. We shall, if consistent, provide for the erection of edifices for the worship of the Creator, and for the support of Christian ministers, if we believe such measures will promote the interests of Christianity. It is the settled conviction of the committee, that the only method of avoiding these consequences, with their attendant train of evils, is to adhere strictly to the spirit of the Constitution, which regards the general government in no other light than that of a civil institution, wholly destitute of religious authority. What other nations call religious toleration, we call religious rights. They are not exercised in virtue of governmental indulgence, but as rights, of which government cannot deprive any portion of citizens, however small. Despotism may invade those rights, but justice still confirms them. *Let the national legislature once perform an act which involves the decision of a religious controversy, and it will have passed its legitimate bounds.* The precedent will then be established, and the foundation laid for that usurpation of the Divine prerogative in this country, which has been the desolating scourge to the fairest portions of the old world."—With the merits of the question at issue in this report, the present essay has nothing to do. But it is evident that the author of the Report himself cared very little about the special subject then claiming his attention. Whether the Sabbath should be sanctified or secularized by legislative enactment, was clearly the least concern of the majority of the committee. The great matter was, to seize the opportunity thus afforded, for promulgating a doctrine which, by unavoidable necessity, leads the Government to lay the axe at the root of all religion, under the hypocritical pretence of patronizing none.

It is easy to conceive why Mr. Johnson should desire to have a report in which a great deal of error was so adroitly entangled with a few self-evident truths, passed and printed without being read. But that deceptive declarations like these should be favorably received by a majority of the National Representatives, before whom they were made, may well amaze us. Even upon the admission, that many sustained the ultimate position taken in the Report, of non-interference on the part of the Government in matters affecting the religious convictions of its citizens, without intending to endorse all the sentiments incidentally introduced, it is still inexplicable that a document, pretending to be a calm and an impartial defence of the religious rights of all our citizens against political infractions, and yet abounding in such badly concealed, bitter, bigotry, should find sufficient favor to carry it successfully through. A cursory examination, however, into the constituency of our National Legislature at the time, might suggest more than one hint explanatory of the strange result arrived at. When motives of a private and selfish nature combine with personal indifference to Religious principles, politicians may find it convenient and easy to compromise many a moral conviction, and give their voice to many a measure of doubtful justice. How much more readily will not those disregard the claims of Religion, and vote away its rights, who are at heart hostile to some of its most sacred principles. The opposition with which the views proclaimed in this Report were met, by the few who ventured to espouse the cause of truth, shows how deeply the injustice and wrong inflicted upon them and their constituents, by the document, was felt. And to this day the convictions, even of many who rejoiced in its final adoption, are, that its success was owing rather to fortuitous circumstances, than to the real force of its arguments, or the agreement of its conclusions, with the spirit of our Federal Constitution or the genius of our National Government. Though the question was legislatively settled at the time, it still continues to be the firm conviction of thousands, that the issue then reached, is in violent conflict with the fundamental principles of our Laws, and therefore cannot be final. The numerous friends of the measure thus defeated, though unprepared for their disappointment, and still more alarmed at the reasons assigned for denying a request supported by arguments so profound and cogent as those assigned in their petition, and proceeding from so large and respectable a number of citizens, continue firm in the convictions then expressed, and are slow to believe that our Gov-

ernment is really as atheistic, as she was at the time persuaded to avow herself.

It must be granted however that this doctrine of the Jeffersonian school, upon the relation of the National and State Governments to Religion, has widely influenced the popular mind upon the subject. The prevailing conviction must be allowed to be, that the highest evidence of the consummate wisdom and political worth, of our Federal and Special constitutions, is furnished by their cold neutrality, and complete indifference upon the general subject of Religion. Not simply is it affirmed and believed, that political *protection* is extended equally to all classes of religious persuasions, so that every man may sit under his own vine and fig-tree, none daring to molest him or make him afraid. The popular notion of the toleration principle, includes *something more neutral and callous* than this. Government is forbidden to cast an approving look, or give an encouraging wink to any. Janus like, she must have a blank face for all, and a beating heart for none. Neither does this view confine itself to those among whom we might naturally expect to meet with it; but even many among the more populous christian denominations of the land, are so far under the influence of the modern spirit of *liberality*, as to share the sentiment upon the ground of neutrality, with those who entertain and press it from hostility to all religion. At first view this fact may excite surprise. We do not wonder at non-religionists, and sceptics, and neutralists, occupying the position which they maintain in this matter; for it is natural that their desires would be the parent of such a conviction, and that they should endeavor accordingly to propagate their progeny by exciting similar desires in others. As little are we surprised that the smaller religious sects of the land, especially those not christian, or if nominally christian openly hostile to the fundamental tenets of evangelical christianity, should find pleasure in such a political doctrine, and aid in spreading it; for it demands more moral heroism than is apt to be found, apart from true christian principles sincerely cherished, to sacrifice bigoted attachment to a religious creed to the public good, *even when intellectual prejudices have been so far overcome as to enable men to see that such a sacrifice is really required.* Even though, therefore, Jews and Turks, and Papists, hold it as a settled religious principle, that political well-being and stability demands the recognition of Religion, in the truest form known, on the part of the State; and even though intellectually they might be convinced that it would be far better for the General and Special Governments of our country, so far to acknowledge

their allegiance to Almighty God as to recognize, and revere, by express enactments, the Religious Principles most prevalent when the Government was founded, and the constitutions framed, or those at present entertained by the largest portion of the population; it can hardly be expected that their warmest patriotism will ever induce them frankly to admit this, much less cordially to unite in endeavoring to have such an opinion generally to prevail.

On the contrary, so far as the subject is at all agitated, or made the incidental topic of conversation, every thing that is said is calculated, as no doubt it is designed, to produce the opposite impression. Hence whatever foreign tourists, visiting our country for literary, social and political purposes, may hear, in reference to the vast number of religious denominations,—the zeal, activity, piety, and benevolence of American Churches, and especially their influence, in their separate capacity, upon the social and moral character of the country,—they are sure to be impressed with the idea, that the United States, as a political fabric, holds in utter abhorrence the prevailing European doctrine concerning the union of Church and State. And this too in the sense, that our Government knows nothing of religion in any form, excepting the right of all religions to full untrammelled toleration. And the reports of foreign travellers among us, fully agree with this prevailing conviction. So that in the view of the rest of the world we occupy, shall we say the enviable or unenviable reputation, of being founded, and managed, as a Government, upon constitutions, and by laws, which glory in excluding all recognition of Religion in any form. What an argument is hereby put into the mouths of the enemies of God and Religion, in view of the present prosperity and flattering prospects of a Republic thus established and maintained! But upon what grounds does this doctrine rest? For what reasons are these convictions or conceits, so fondly cherished? A candid consideration of these inquiries must serve, we think, to explode the doctrine, and expose the utter fallacy of the arguments by which it is defended.

The substance of what has commonly been urged in maintenance of this view, and in opposition to those who have contended for the contrary opinion, may be stated in the following points. 1. The office of civil government is purely and exclusively political. 2. No just medium can be found, or long maintained by civil government, between recognizing religious principles, and committing itself to the special protection and support of some particular religious organization. 3. All clas-

ses of citizens have equal claims upon the Government for protection and favor, without the least reference to their religious tenets. 4. Hence Government dare not recognize any form of Religion or system of religious truth whatever. And finally, 5. This is the view entertained by the original founders of our Republic, and the several Commonwealths composing it, as is proven by their history, and the constitutions framed for their government. This we believe is a full and fair statement of the case, as argued by those whose doctrine we have now under consideration. Let us take up each of these points separately, and see whether they really possess the force attributed to them, and "carry the irresistible energy of truth."

It is affirmed in the first place that *the office of civil government is purely and exclusively political, and therefore the Government may not intermeddle with matters of Religion.* This is the pivot upon which the Report already quoted turns. The sentiment was quickly snatched up and has been reiterated by others, with the addition of some rhetorical ornaments. "Civil government," says one writer upon the subject "is intended for the regulation of social man—for the promotion and security of human happiness here on earth. It is intended for this world, not for the next. It should protect us in the enjoyment of our personal rights and property. It should not interfere with our opinions and faith. Its business is with our temporal or present interests, not with our future or eternal welfare. \* \* \* Civil government should regulate the duty of man towards man. It should not interfere with the relations between man and his Creator. *Offences against society should be punished by society! Offences against God should be left to God!* It argues great folly, as well as impiety, to suppose the Deity so weak as to require aid from society, or so negligent as to suffer offenders to escape with impunity! *Deorum injuriæ diis curiæ*, was the wise and humble maxim of Pagans." This is so fair a specimen of the mode of reasoning employed in support of this view, that additional quotations would be superfluous. And surely no one would desire assertions so absurd and flat, to be introduced in more than one form in the same article! Who has ever thought of denying that the *primary* office of civil government, is to regulate the affairs of civil society? But who, on the other hand, excepting such as may sympathise with the writer of the above, in his brain-bewildering fears of ecclesiastical tyranny, has ever dreamed of so utterly unqualified a repudiation of the relations of civil government to morality and God? If these are the great arguments, by which alone the advocates of an

ecclesiastical establishment can be met, and their bad politics refuted, we fear that our citizens and legislators will no sooner get rid of educational and political prejudices, and awake to a due exercise of reason, than they will at once raise voice and hand in favor of a union of Church and State. Can it be, that our political captains and standard-bearers have no better weapons, with which to repel the alarming encroachments of spiritual ambition, and ecclesiastical usurpation!

Very different from this is the doctrine our fathers have taught us, touching the nature and relations of civil government. Government, if their creed is correct, and has been rightly understood, is the just application of a system of polity, adopted by a nation or state, to the civil and social wants of its citizens. It rests upon the existence of a written, or tacitly assumed, code of laws or constitution, regulating all its actions. The Government of a country therefore is its Constitution in action, the actualization of its laws, in their regulation of the civil interests of the State, through the lawfully appointed administration. All this now necessarily presupposes the existence of a community or society of people, who have agreed, for their mutual protection and well-being, to form themselves into a civil organization, a body politic, under a common constitution and code of laws. This civil organization however cannot be regarded as the off-spring of mere accidental aggregation or agreement. It is as really the result of a sense of moral and social wants, as hunting, and tilling the ground, are attributable to a sense of bodily wants, or as the contrivance of weapons of warfare and defence is to be traced to a consciousness of danger, or a spirit of aggression. Not of course that a full and clear conception of the precise nature of all man's social necessities, has been possessed in every case from the start; any more than when men first applied themselves to letters, they had a complete view of all their intellectual wants and capabilities. Still a sense of the moral and social relations, in which men find themselves involved by their natural constitution, must be admitted as the primary motive, urging to the formation of such social compacts. Civil government consequently, finds its first root in the moral and social constitution of man. It is the natural, and, if faithful to its office, the legitimate product of his moral and social wants. "The end of its institution maintenance, and administration, should be to render secure the existence of the body politic, to protect it, and to furnish the individuals who compose it with the power of enjoying in safety and tranquillity their natural rights, and the blessings of life. • • The body politic is a so-

cial compact, by which the whole people covenants with each citizen, and each citizen with the whole people, that all shall be governed by certain laws for the common good. \* \* \*

Among the natural and inalienable rights of men may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties; that of acquiring, possessing and protecting property; in fine, that of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness."

Such being the source and aim of political organizations and of civil governments, it follows beyond contradiction, that just in proportion as the State and its government approximate more perfectly to the legitimate end of their existence, they will make the most complete and equitable provision, for all the moral and social wants of the citizens comprised within their limits. Indeed as the offspring of the people thus united in a civil compact, and as the organ of their united convictions, desires, and will, the people themselves, will demand of the Government such provisions, in proportion as they become conscious of their need of them. And the Government is bound to acquiesce in these requisitions, or resign its office, unless this may be held upon other conditions than those above assumed.

If therefore civil government, in so far as it is of human origin, is the creature of the people uniting under it, and if, by their own confession, its professed object is to make adequate provision for their relative moral and for their social wants, it may certainly be expected that the higher and more important these wants are, the more ready and anxious will they be that their government should endeavor to have them fully met. Having felt themselves socially and morally constrained, to combine in such general organizations, in order the better to secure and promote their well-being and happiness, as a community of moral and social beings, they must assuredly feel equally constrained, now that they have entered into such a compact, to make constitutional and efficient provision, adequate to the end proposed.

But has religion nothing to do with the social and political, not to say moral well-being and happiness of a State? Is it a matter of perfect indifference to a Government, what views and principles prevail among its citizens, in reference to religion? Can it be of no concern to our Congress, or to our State Legislatures, considered as purely political bodies, whether the religion of our citizens is becoming predominantly Mahomedan, or Patagonian, or Chinese? Would they be true to their honest convictions of what is required by the real well-being of the nation or state, or of what their constituents at large believe to be required by it, by admitting and tolerating either or all of



these, or as many others, of like stamp, as might sue for admission to the union, and crave its privileges and protection? Or, to get a step nearer the source of government, consider the case in view of those from whom the State and its constitution have sprung, the people. Assume them to be predominantly christian. As such they acknowledge their dependence upon God, and their allegiance to Him. They receive the Holy Scriptures as His revealed will, and confess their subjection to them as their highest moral code. In a word they acknowledge that all their dearest and most sacred interests are in inseparable connection with their religious character and duties. How now can those possessed of such convictions be expected to lay them all aside, and utterly disregard them, when they resolve themselves into a national community? It may be safely submitted to the impartial judgment even of those who deny the right of Government to interfere with religious principles, to say, whether a people, holding and avowing such views as these, could, without the greatest inconsistency and an utter repudiation of their own creed, go deliberately to work, organize a government, frame a constitution, and enact laws, and in the whole transaction not admit a single sentence in favor of any religious principles? And yet this is what their theory demands. Here is a constitution and government formed under circumstances answering strictly to the case supposed. The people originating and sustaining it were and are predominantly Christian at least, not to define their religion more closely, but they must give no hint of this in their political acts. They believe in Almighty God, and hold that He is the Great Governor of men and nations, but must not acknowledge their national allegiance to Him lest they should trench illiberally upon the theology of some polytheistic, or atheistic citizen. They are fully satisfied that there is no element, which can mix in with the components of the national existence, so potent for good or evil as the religious, and yet must not suffer a single letter of their constitution, or the smallest item of their legal code, to give the slightest intimation of this conviction, lest they should thereby violate the sacred rights of conscience. Laws may be enacted, altered, and amended, at pleasure, to regulate commerce, agriculture, and the arts, but no law or by-law, nothing that the nation does or can do, must say, even most darkly, whether it believes in one God or a thousand, whether it receives the Bible or the Koran, as His revelation. For if the Government undertakes to define its religious position even in the least iota, it departs, according to this theory, from its legitimate functions, and converts itself into a theo-

logical tribunal, becomes inevitably involved in all the bitter controversies of the church, and may be expected to play on in the religious drama, until the last scene closes with a general *auto da fe*!

Now there is one thing about this theory which makes it less dangerous than it would otherwise be, namely that it refutes itself. It need only speak out its views distinctly, in order to utter a sentence of self-condemnation. For it is surely self-evident that it demands a natural and moral impossibility, as well as a complete sacrifice of all religious fidelity. Such a disruption of the social and moral, from the religious nature of man as it requires, cannot be conceived of, apart from the most violent injustice to his whole being. Man cannot be a servant of God as a man, and an atheist as a citizen. His religious and social nature being both derived from God, they can both find their true life only in Him. The two inseparately interpenetrate each other, and cannot prosper in a political divorcement.

The theory under consideration assumes that Religion and Civil Government issue from totally different sources. This is its grand mistake. Under the influence of this fundamental error, the advocates of the theory get more widely out of the way, as they advance in their argument. Religion and Civil Government on the contrary have both but one origin, flow from the same divine source. They are twin sisters of celestial birth. In reference to Religion this will of course be admitted as the only rational view of its origin. But this view is also the only proper and secure ultimate basis of Civil Government. However variant the *forms* of Government may be, accordingly as the peculiar circumstances out of which they may temporally have sprung may differ, Government itself is as really the result of a divinely implanted constitution in the human race, as is Religion. For just as one of the two primary facts upon which the existence of Religion among men rests, is man's natural capability of knowing, loving, and serving God, (the possession of which most clearly indicates the highest design of man's creation), so the deepest and last reason which can be assigned for the existence of Civil Government, is to be found alone in that social and moral nature with which the Creator has endowed man, and which cannot thrive or ripen to full development excepting within its genial sphere. In our country indeed this is generally admitted, though under a different form, when it is affirmed, as the broad foundation of all free governments, that all men are *created* with certain and equal inalienable rights, thus appealing, for the righteousness of the claims urged, to the

expressed will of the Creator. No sooner therefore is this admission made, than the view for which we are contending follows as a necessary inference. Men in their combined civil capacity cannot divest themselves of the responsibilities and duties which devolve upon them as individuals. If they have faith in God at all, if they ever cherish hearty reverence for Him, they cannot lay aside these strongest and holiest feelings of their souls, just then when they are about to engage in one of the most momentous and solemn duties they can ever be summoned to discharge. But if they cannot consistently do this, and should never be asked to do it, surely they must be allowed to give their constitution and laws so much of a religious character as will indicate, though in a very general way yet unequivocally, whether they are a Christian or a Pagan people, worshippers of the Sun or of Him who made it.

Civil Government therefore can no more divest itself of its divine genealogy and obligations, than can the intelligent and moral agents constituting it get rid of their's. However closely it may confine itself to the legitimate sphere of its political duties, yet as even the politics of such a people cannot utterly exclude Religion, or prosper independently of its help, so it cannot be inconsistent for Government to discharge its civil offices with conscientious reference to its religious responsibilities.

It is by no means denied hereby that the duties of Civil Government are pre-eminently political. There can be no objection even to admitting that they are exclusively so, if by exclusively be understood the shutting out simply of all that can be excluded without detriment to the true political interests of the State. But we must protest against the inference often drawn from this premise, viz: that Government may not at all meddle with matters which concern Religion. And surely the advocates of this view cannot be in earnest, when they attempt to sustain it by such theology as is taught in the quotations made on a previous page! Since however it is the best that is offered, let us examine it somewhat more minutely.

"Civil Government," it is said, "is intended for the regulation of social man, for the promotion and security of human happiness here on earth." A very exalted and rational view of the great design of political institutions. But for this very reason it must exclude the inference which it is intended should be drawn therefrom. On the contrary so long as religion remains the purest and highest source of social happiness, and so long as its principles continue to be the preserving salt of human society, so long must Civil Government seek in some way to propitiate

her favor, and secure the blessings of a perpetual abode of Religion in its midst. Or would the advocates of the opposite view persuade us that Religion has nothing to do with social man, or with the promotion and perpetuation of human happiness on earth! It would almost seem so from the tenor of the second period in the above quotations. It affirms that Government "is intended for this world, not for the next;" therefore again can have nothing to do with matters involving religion! And why this? Because Religion has nothing to do with men's temporal or terrestrial relations? For aught that appears to the contrary, this is the doctrine taught. But assuredly no christian writer could advocate such views!

Again it is admitted that it is the duty of Civil Government to "protect us in the enjoyment of our personal rights and property." Now one of the holiest and dearest rights of a christian man, or a christian community, is to avow their faith in God, and their submission to His revealed will. This constitutes for them the highest blessing of civil liberty. But if Civil Government secure to them these rights, it must of necessity allow them the exercise of their religious prerogative in their civil relations, and thus become unavoidably involved in matters of religion.

So again when it said that the business of Civil Government is with our temporal interests, that it should regulate the duty of man towards man, and punish offences against society; unless Religion is denied all participation in these things, it must be granted, that these duties of Civil Government, instead of forbidding its association with Religion, really demand that it should in some way recognize it, and legislate with reference to its established principles.

But we are reluctant further to pursue a theological path so crooked and tangled as this. Neither does the case require it. For until it is shown that civil society can divest itself of the religious character and responsibilities of its individual members, or that God has nothing to do with moral agents in their civil or national capacity, it may be triumphantly maintained, that Civil Government cannot and should not be kept wholly asunder from Religion. And still further, until it is demonstrated, that a political organization can dispense with all moral regulations, or that it may devise and adopt some other moral code than that derived from the sacred books of Christianity, it must be conceded, that by mainly adopting the principles of this code, it unavoidably commits itself in favor of that Religion to which the code belongs. So that in whatever aspect of the subject we may select, we receive the same impressions. The very idea of

Civil Government as a political institution, involves it with Religion in some form or other. No political surgery can sever the bonds uniting them without at least fatally maiming the former, if not periling its very existence.'

Another objection to this view, and an additional reason for requiring Civil Government to keep itself entirely separate from Religion, is supposed to be found in the *inseparable difficulty of maintaining a proper position in reference to matters of religious faith and practice*. Even if the propriety of making some general acknowledgements were yielded, it is contended that Government could not remain with this, but would find itself gradually yet irresistibly impelled onward to something more. For however general and liberal the admissions first made might be, it is affirmed that they would be the entering wedge of more special and particular concessions. Thus the Government would be, slowly perhaps but surely, implicated in favor of the religious tenets of some particular denomination of the land, and thereby give it the first impulse to political ascendancy. And inasmuch as all history unites in testifying to the aggressive spirit of ecclesiastical organizations, and mournfully exemplifies their thirst after political influence, and their frequent abuse of it when it has once been obtained, political prudence is supposed to dictate the expediency of forestalling the evil by checking first attempts.

The misfortunes and misdoings of the Church, in connection with the political speculations, in which the force of outward circumstances, or the unwise ambition of her more influential leaders, have heretofore involved her, have indeed afforded her enemies, or such as were still more ambitious in another sphere than her aspiring sons, abundant opportunity for declamation and reproach. And of course those who desired to make out a case in their own favor at the expense of the interests of Religion, would not feel called upon to state any of the advantages resulting to the state and to humanity, from these political exploits of the Church, but rather hold them up as always and unmixedly evil. It would not be hard however to find, in the same histories which tell us of the disasters brought upon the State by its political combinations with the Church, evidence showing on the one hand, that the condition of the State might

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'See Burlamaqui's "Nat. and Polit. Law," (Nugent's translation) vol. I. P. 2, Chap. II and VI.

Montesquieu's "Spirit of Laws," B. 24, 25, 26.

Vattel's "Law of Nations," B. I, Chap. 2, and 12.

have been still worse but for this combination, and on the other that the Church, even in its meekest and most spiritual times, suffered indescribably more evil from the State than ever she inflicted upon it. Neither should all the blame be cast upon the Church, if cunning politicians, finding their usual foot-hold failing them, craftily betook themselves to her foundations, and by a skilful appropriation of the material there obtained, erected a politico-religious fabrick, of which they might have the supreme command, and so retrieve their ruined fortunes.

And yet we are free to admit that the evils of national ecclesiastical establishments cannot be easily exaggerated. Our sympathies are strongly with those who hold them in hearty abhorrence. The disasters, both for Church and State, which have been connected with them in ages past, are a clear indication of the mind of God concerning them, and practically prove, that Christ will not have His kingdom to be of this world. Above all the Church has nothing to gain, and every thing to hazard from such combinations. So long as society remains in its present mixed and imperfect condition, Civil Government and the Church are not prepared for the consummation of those nuptial joys in which they are destined to be ultimately united.

All this however may be admitted without involving assent to the objection now under review. This objection is based upon an oversight or denial of a well-defined and generally admitted fact, in reference to the relation subsisting between general religious principles, and religious organizations, based upon these principles, and constituted by those agreeing in faith, for their maintenance and propagation. It is assumed that this relation is so intimate, as that the holding of religious principles must necessarily and hastily lead to the formation of religious societies. But this is a manifest fallacy. How many in every community, who hold to the existence of God, acknowledge the divine authority of the sacred scriptures, and in a word assent to all the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, who yet are never led to unite even with already existing religious societies. But *are* they, or are they *thought* infidels or atheists on this account? Assuredly not, however heartily it may be regretted, for their own sakes, that they persist in their refusal to do more than merely assent intellectually to the main principles of the christian creed. Or are persons of this description supposed to be committed to any denominational interests, because they *avow* such assent? Does their acknowledging these general and self-evident christian truths, convert them into Presbyterians, or Episcopalians, Reformed, Lutherans or Methodists? By no

means. Neither would a similar acknowledgment on the part of the State, involve it in denominational favoritism, or expose it to the danger of being finally clogged with an ecclesiastical establishment. Indeed it no more follows, that such concessions on the part of the State implies a tendency to its ultimate union with the Church, than that the avowal on the part of our general government, of certain broad, and commonly received political principles, necessarily involves a tendency to interference on the part of the National with the State Governments. What, for instance, has the general government of the United States to do with the private rights, and personal prerogatives of the citizens of the several confederate States? It is well known with how much jealousy the movements of the National Legislature are watched, in reference to aught that inclines to interference with State rights. And yet no one has ever thought of complaining at the avowal of the great first principles of political orthodoxy, set forth in the glorious Declaration of Independence, and reiterated a thousand times since. Perfect security is felt in the solemn guaranty of the National Constitution that no such interference shall ever be attempted. So too might the nation be made to feel equally secure against the future introduction of a General Church Establishment, even though the National Constitution might avow, or silently assume the cardinal doctrines of revealed religion. Altogether therefore the apprehension that such an avowal, on the part of the State, would necessarily be the first step towards an ultimate union of Church and State, must be dismissed as unfounded and absurd. There is as much reason to apprehend a combination of the National Government with the American Temperance Union, for the purpose of making its principles the religion of the land. What christian denomination would be favored or patronized by such an avowal of religious truth as the objectors would forbid? What denomination can claim God as exclusively its Lord? Whose Bible are the sacred Scriptures? Which is distinguished by holding more than the rest, to man's moral accountability? These questions require no answer. And yet the apprehensions of the objectors anticipate such changes in the religious, or rather denominational interests of our country, as are far less likely to occur, than a dissolving of the State Government, into one consolidated confederacy. For before ever the fears entertained or affected with reference to this result, can be realized, some one of the many christian persuasions found among us must have so swollen its population, as to be able to prevail at the ballot-box, or in the battle-field, against the combined strength



of all the rest, backed by myriads of non-religionists always ready to join in the resistance of ecclesiastical ambition. In deed according to the rule of human probabilities, there is far more reason to fear that our civil and religious liberties may, at no very distant day, become a prey to the devouring fury of rabid infidelity, or the gorging ambition of political demagogues, than suffer harm in a single interest from the aspirations of the Christian Church. Before any existing or imaginary form of Religion can become dominant here, or secure its temporal aggrandizement by being elevated to the dignity and prerogatives of a National Church, greater violence must be done to the General and State constitutions and laws, deeper and stronger prejudices be overcome in the national mind and heart, and altogether a mightier revolution take place in all the political and religious convictions of the great mass of our citizens, than there are any rational grounds for anticipating. In order therefore to quell those rising fears of ecclesiastical usurpation, or shame them out of the mind, it is only necessary to consider how few of the fifteen millions of Protestants of our land, or even of the two millions of Roman Catholics, could be found to favor any attempts that might be contemplated in this direction; and still more how earnestly the millions that have no sympathy with the Church, would contend, to the last extremity of resistance, against the execution of such a scheme.

This objection therefore forms no valid reason why our civil government should not avow its belief in the cardinal principles of the Christian Religion.

*But would not the Government be thus involved in an interference with the religious views and convictions of its individual citizens?* As is well known almost every variety of religious opinion exists among us. Independently of the diversity of sentiment prevailing among those who are not identified with any religious profession or creed, our nominally christian population is distributed among some fifty already existent denominations, numbering each from a few millions to a few tens of members, and are continually subdividing into others ever new appearing. Besides these we have among us not a few Jews, some thousands of Indians, and possibly a dozen or two Mohammedans. To all these now, it is said the Government has guaranteed equal civil and religious rights. It is solemnly pledged to extend the strong arm of political protection over all alike. As a Government they are all equally its citizens, and as citizens should all be equally esteemed. All therefore may claim protection in the free enjoyment and exercise of their re-

ligious convictions and worship, whatever they may be, so long as these do not jeopardize or discommode the rights of others.

Certainly no one would think of questioning a word of this, or denying the rights thus claimed on behalf of every citizen of the land. But what has all this to do with the inference to be drawn from it? How would it interfere with any of these rights for the Government to do all that we believe to be desirable, and that we hold her bound to do according to the positions maintained in answer to the first objection? Is there a Jew or Greek, or Turk, or Indian in the land, who would or could justly complain, if our National or our State Constitutions expressed assent to the doctrine of God's existence, or of His sovereignty and universal Providence? Might they not all enjoy their several religions, without the least molestation, even if Government avowed itself, in some such general way, favorable to the leading tenets of Christianity? Would the Turk be constrained to love the Koran less, because the Government revered the Bible more? Would the Israelite's faith in Moes and the Prophets be at all infringed upon, because our national code believed besides in Christ and the Apostles? Would it require them to chant less joyfully, or to pray with suppressed fervor?

The objection assumes more than the premises allow. Government does indeed guarantee to every citizen, protection in the enjoyment of his religious rights, non-interference with his religious convictions. And this guaranty should be kept inviolate. But does Government hereby surrender her right, or betray her duty, to recognize the fundamental doctrines of that system of religion which is most heartily believed to be the true one? Before ever the followers of Mohammed, or the disciples of Zoroaster or of Fo select this country for their abode, they know its predominant religious character, and are assured by our laws of nothing more than protection in the enjoyment of their religious rights. More than this they have no right to demand, and no reason to expect. If they choose to make a christian land their country and their home, they can certainly not require it to study all their sacred folios in order carefully to avoid offending them by enactments impliedly prejudicial to their private religious fancies. Otherwise our legislators would need to acquaint themselves very minutely with the mysteries of solar theology, and the hidden secrets of astrology, before they could venture to prepare a single report, or draw up one act for adoption. But the truth is, that excepting in the case of the denominations of Sabbatarians, no religious community, has ever dreamed of urging a complaint against the favor thus indirectly shown

to Christianity, by its recognition of some general religious truths. Whatever complaints have been made in the case, have come from those rather, who care as little for Mohammed as for Moses, and far less for both than for *themselves*.

This then brings us to the real point of difficulty in this whole argument. When the undisguised truth is spoken, it will reveal the fact, that the restless and radical spirit of Infidelity, in its variously assumed forms, is the underground volcanic cause, of whatever commotion may agitate the public mind upon this important question. The controversy is not and never has been between the different religious denominations of the land. They almost universally agree in sentiment upon this subject. Strong as their sectarian prejudices may be, and mournful as their mutual jealousies may have been, they are strangers to any serious fears that either might by any possibility become the reigning religion of the Nation. The petitions which gave rise to the Sunday Mail's Report furnish satisfactory proof of this.

The great question then to be decided in this case is, *whether the obligations of civil government to Infidelity and Irreligion, or to the religious Indifferentism of the land, are such as to forbid its avowal of belief in certain general religious tenets.* This question, it is trusted, need not long remain unanswered. In point of fact we shall soon see that our Government has unequivocally answered it already. And but little reflection is required to convince all open to conviction, that the course thus pursued is in full agreement with every principle of equity and moral right. For the demands of Infidelity, and of those who ask that nothing may be intimated or done by the State which shall affect their opinions of religion, are manifestly such as Government cannot comply with, without transgressing those very limits of neutrality within which she is required to confine herself. For if the Creator of the world is the legitimate Sovereign of all its intelligent and moral inhabitants, and if His Divine Sovereignty extends not only to men in their individual capacity, but to communities and nations, then the duty of a Government with reference to a formal recognition of this Sovereignty is undeniable. Whenever therefore such a recognition is withheld, or upon such political grounds as have already been assigned is pronounced inexpedient and inconsistent with the spirit of free institutions, the doctrine of the Divine Supremacy is virtually repudiated, a silent decision is passed in favor of atheism, or of deism, and thus again the Government betrayed into a transgression of the very limits by which liberalists would have its actions bounded.

In this dilemma then it is for Government to choose its alternative, by those rules which truth, justice, and profound wisdom may dictate. Seeing the impossibility of maintaining such neutrality as some demand, it must decide upon the relative merits of these conflicting claims in view of their bearing upon the true well-being of the country. If Infidelity and Irreligion are honestly believed to be more salutary to a nation than Christianity, if their prevalence, according to the testimony of past history, and present facts, is more likely to promote our political prosperity, if in proportion as our citizens become infidel or deistic we may expect the nation at large to advance in intelligence, in virtue, and in social happiness, why then Government, *as a purely civil institution*, might feel itself called upon to cast the weight of its moral influence into the scale of atheism. On the contrary, however, if there is good reason to believe that Government owes more of its past success, and present prosperity to the various moral and social influences exerted by christianity, than to any other source,—that the future condition of the nation will be flourishing only in proportion as her citizens are pervaded and governed by the spirit of that religion,—and finally that the highest civil and social interests of the union are vitally bound up with those of christianity, then, *upon the same purely political grounds*, must the Government feel bound to avow itself a christian government.

To those who are aware of the looseness of the prevailing popular opinions upon this subject, and of the craft and diligence, with which many who are hostile to the christian religion and the church, are endeavoring to have those nominally liberal sentiments confirmed in the popular mind, no apology need be offered for the space which has been devoted to the consideration of its more abstract merits. However self-evident the positions we have assumed may seem to be to some, the truth is that they are often virtually and practically surrendered as erroneous. It is to be feared that not a few of our best and most virtuous citizens, have, without due reflection, let themselves be betrayed into the belief, that the maxim, "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's," really means, that Caesar has nothing to do with God. Hoodwinked by the sophistry of those who represent Divine truths and religious organizations as always and inseparably connected, they have permitted themselves to be hurried into the persuasion, that the Civil Government had better avoid all reference to religion. The pernicious tendency of this false political theology must be manifest upon the least earnest consideration. Instead therefore

of at once yielding to its plausible appeals, its progress should be anxiously watched. It has no right to demand unhesitating assent to its bold and novel assumptions. Least of all have the true friends of religion a right to yield unthinkingly to its impious demands. They should not fear the imputation of bigotry, or superstition, because they choose to require good reasons for embracing the views which it is attempted so hastily to force upon them. It is surely as commendable to be firm in adhering to the old and tried maxims of our fathers, as to be reckless in espousing the irreligious fancies of modern liberalists. As yet our political institutions may be safe. There are however omens sufficiently portentous of future evil, issuing from the very quarter from which this doctrine of non-government-religion proceeds, to wake up the slumbering friends of true civil order and social well-being, to suspicious vigilance. These omens should not be disregarded. It is far easier to retain sound principles now held upon this subject, than it would be to recover them when once lost.

Leaving then these general considerations, let us pass on to inquire briefly, into *the relation which our political institutions actually sustain to religion*. It has already been shown that there are two leading forms in which a Government may be related to Religion, the one by a formal union of the State with some ecclesiastical establishment, the other by a mere recognition, on the part of the State, of the fundamental doctrines of the true religion, and its general principles of morality. We have also seen that the latter by no means involves the former, nor yet a necessary tendency that way. Now it is in the latter respect alone that we maintain that our Government is committed in favor of that system of religion which characterizes *Protestant evangelical christianity*.

There are two main sources to which we must look for whatever evidence may be needed upon this subject. The first is to the action of the nation in its confederate capacity. This, in view of the peculiar relation sustained by the General to the State Government, must be expected to be very indefinite in a case like this. The second and more important source is the Constitutions and Laws of the several Commonwealths comprising the Republic.

Both these sources now furnish, in the first place, the most satisfactory evidence that our civil government does not discard, but most sincerely recognizes and respects religion in some of its leading principles.

Of this we find remarkably clear proof already in that great

and imperishable document from the adoption and issue of which our Republic dates its birth. In the first paragraph of the Declaration of Independence, the representatives of the Colonies, then already virtually sundered from the British government, and acting in the capacity of an independent Nation, avowed in the name of their constituents, their faith in a personal self-subsistent God, as the author of nature's laws, and yet himself distinct from and exalted above nature. The next paragraph opens with an explicit statement of this, among other "self-evident truths," viz: that this God of nature is the Creator of man, and that man as the creature can lay claim to no other rights than those with which his Maker has endowed him. "All men are created, \* \*, and endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights." In a subsequent period the *great doctrine of revealed religion touching the moral accountability of the creature to the Creator, and more especially of political governments to the King of kings* is adopted with most solemn emphasis. It is contained in that earnest and devout appeal with which the Declaration closes. "We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, *appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the rectitude of our intentions, &c., &c.* And, for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the *protection of Divine Providence*, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor." When the circumstances under which this Declaration was made are duly considered, the avowal of sentiments like these, and at such a time, must be allowed to be deeply significant. They are a most solemn pledge to the christian world at large, that the Government about to be established may be justly reckoned a friend of religion. If they are any thing more than the hypocritical flourish of pious professions, introduced for the purpose of propitiating the favor of christianity, they undoubtedly obligate the nation to the maintenance of so much of the christian system as they avow. That this was designed is self-evident, and being so proves that the *intention* of the nation at the start was, not by any means to establish a Government which should be utterly independent of religion or indifferent to it, but one which should forever acknowledge God, and virtually maintain and promote the great fundamental truths of revealed religion. It is only in this view of the case, that we can at all fairly account for the fact, that in a document, which might very readily have excluded every allusion to religious sentiments, so many should be so distinctly announced.

In refutation however of all this, the position taken in the Constitution of the United States, might be appealed to, to prove that such an intention as is assumed above, is plainly repudiated, if it ever had been entertained. That position may be regarded as not simply neutral, but decidedly negative in its character. For when it provides, (Art. VI. Sect. 3), that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States;" and again (Amend. Art. I.) enacts, that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;" it does appear as though, in over anxiety to forestall any inclination even to the establishment of a national church, all recognition of religion under any form were studiously avoided. This, we are free to confess, is a remarkable feature in an instrument framed for the government of such a nation, and at such a time. It would indeed seem as though the solemn vow, previously made in a season of trouble, had been wholly forgotten. The contrast, in this respect, between the Declaration of Independence and this Constitution, is humiliating and painful. The appeal made to the King of kings in the former, followed by ten thousand fervent supplications from an afflicted struggling people, was not unavailing. But we look in vain in this great Charter, in which that Declaration found its happy consummation, for a counterpart to that appeal. How shall this painful incongruity be reconciled! That the defect of the Constitution in this respect, was deeply felt and deplored, at the time of its adoption, is well known. It was however not so easy to remedy the evil as to feel it. Numerous as were the sincere friends of religion, in the Convention of '87, and heartily as they may have desired that at least some general acknowledgement of the great principles of christianity should be made, it would have been hazardous to all the interests at stake, to attempt the introduction of the subject under the circumstances then existing. For there were a few members, headed by Jefferson, who would have opposed the attempt to the last. It was not by accident that he had omitted all reference to religion in a positive way, in the first draft of the instrument; and it would not have been easy to gain his consent or that of his friends, to its introduction afterwards. This therefore may be classed among those things in the Constitution of which the immortal Washington says: "I readily acknowledge they never did, and I am persuaded never will, obtain my cordial approbation; but I did then conceive, and do now most firmly believe, that in the aggregate, it is the best constitution that can be obtained at this epoch, and



that this, or a dissolution, awaits our choice, and is the only alternative."

Whilst however candor requires us to make these concessions, justice demands that this peculiarity of the National Constitution should not be forced in as evidence of what it by no means proves. For the fact dare not be overlooked, that it was in no sense the province of the National Constitution or Government to make provision for the moral and religious wants of the citizens of the Republic. This duty belonged to the Legislatures of the several States. Neither would these have been disposed to allow of such an apparent interference with their Sovereign Authority, even in favor of religion, lest advantage might be taken of the precedent to do so in other matters.

Besides this, the Constitution is to be considered as rather *assuming the truth* of the christian religion, than legislating against it. This had been openly and avowedly the religion of the Colonies. It was universally known to be that of all the Representatives, with but a very few exceptions. The laws of the nation, as administered at the time of its adoption, were uniformly administered upon this assumption. It was countenanced, and approved, in a most decided form, in the daily devotions with which the Congress was opened. So that all that was deemed necessary, was a guaranty to the States from the General Government, that no sectarian or denominational tenets, or form of religion, should ever be made a test of qualification for office, or be fastened upon the Republic as a National Religion. The States were individually to be left at full liberty, in this respect to exercise their elective rights. Not however at liberty to elect at pleasure a Turk or a Pagan. For it was as confidently presumed that such an exercise of their liberty would not be attempted, as that it was taken for granted that no State would send an idiot or a madman to represent her in the National Legislature. But as the moral and general religious character of the States were known, sufficient confidence was felt in the good sense, and moral integrity of the citizens of the States, to silence all fears, that any choice repugnant to the prevailing sympathies and convictions of the nation, would be carefully and conscientiously avoided. And past experience has proven, this confidence not to have been misplaced. Whatever at times may have been the warmth of party feeling, and the bitterness of sectarian prejudice, the religious principles of the great majority of our National Legislators, have altogether been as decidedly christian, as those of the members of the English Parliament, notwithstanding the influence of their ecclesiastical establishment.

The view now taken of the true position of the National Constitution is by no means new. It is taught and ably advocated by the most distinguished Jurists and Statesmen of our land. A single quotation from the Commentary of Chief Justice Story will show that it has his full sanction. In his comment upon the amendments Art. I. he says: "The right of a society or government to interfere in matters of religion will hardly be contested by any persons who believe that piety, religion and morality are intimately connected with the well-being of the State, and indispensable to the administration of civil justice. The promulgation of the great doctrines of religion; the being, and attributes, and providence of one Almighty God; the responsibility to Him for all our actions, founded upon moral freedom and accountability; a future state of rewards and punishment; the cultivation of all the personal, social and benevolent virtues;—these never can be a matter of indifference in any well ordered community. It is, indeed, difficult to conceive, how any civilized society can well exist without them. And at all events it is impossible for those, who believe in the truth of christianity, as a divine revelation, to doubt that it is the especial duty of Government to foster and encourage it among all the citizens and subjects. This is a point wholly distinct from that of the right of private judgement in matters of religion, and of the freedom of public worship according to the dictates of one's own conscience."

"Probably at the time of the adoption of the Constitution, and of the amendment to it, now under consideration, the general, if not the universal sentiment in America was, that christianity ought to receive encouragement from the State, so far as it is not incompatible with the private rights of conscience, and the freedom of religious worship."

"The real object of the amendment was, not to countenance, much less to advance Mahommedanism or Judaism, or infidelity, by prostrating Christianity; but to exclude all rivalry among christian sects, and to prevent any national ecclesiastical establishment, which should give to an hierarchy the exclusive patronage of the national government."

It is however mainly to the State constitutions and laws that we must look for the most direct evidence in this case. To those belong properly the duty and right of making such provision for the religious and moral wants of society as may be thought expedient. The definite and decided tone of the majority of these, now, will be found to compensate very amply, for the apparent deficiency of the national constitution. In all the

*constitutions* of the several States, we find the existence and Providence of Almighty God, the accountability of man, and the institution and importance of religion in the forms under which it is known in the commonwealth, explicitly recognized; whilst some of them speak out still more decidedly and by name in favor of the christian religion. Our limits forbid the quotation of passages from the whole of them in proof of this, and should a selection be made it might be thought partial. It will be better therefore to refer the reader to those documents themselves, that each one may for himself judge of their import. And we feel confident that if they are carefully and impartially examined, they will convince every candid mind, that those who framed and adopted them, honestly intended to avow themselves and their several States, the decided friends of the christian religion, so far as this could be done without infringing upon the reasonable rights and convictions of others. Neither will any fair construction of the prohibitions, which most of them contain, against the establishment of a State Church, interpret them as a disavowal of such religious faith, or preference.

If on the other hand we turn to the legal codes of the States, it will be seen that they all assume it as a point fully settled that christianity is the religion of the State. In proof of this many pages of the most pointed testimony might be quoted, but we shall limit ourselves to a few references to the laws of our own State, as a fair specimen of the character of the rest, and as being of most immediate interest to us.

By the laws of Pennsylvania the *Christian Sabbath* is expressly recognized and protected against profanation, and the needless violation of it is punishable, as any other crime, in our courts of justice. Accordingly in the case of the Commonwealth vs. Wolf (a Jew), decided in 1817; and again in that of Specht (a Seventh-day Baptist) vs. the Commonwealth, decided in May 1848, the Supreme Court declare the observance of the Christian Sabbath, by cessation from work, to be binding upon all the citizens of the State, and give verdict against the offenders; and this not upon the ground of a natural but the divine law, as understood by the Christian Church.

Again: under the statutes of Pennsylvania, "whoever shall willfully, premeditatedly, and despitefully blaspheme, and speak loosely and profanely of Almighty God, Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit, or the Scriptures of truth, and is legally convicted thereof"—shall be subject to a penalty. The validity of this ancient statute was fairly tested in the case of Updegraff of Pittsburg, in 1824; and the opinion of Judge Duncan upon it is able and

characteristic, and well worthy of a careful perusal. He says among other things equally in point: "The bold ground is taken, though it has often been exploded, and nothing but what is trite can be said upon it—it is a barren soil, upon which no flower ever blossomed;—the assertion is once more made, that christianity never was received as a part of the common law of this christian land; and it is added, that if it was, it was virtually repealed by the Constitution of the United States, and of this State, as inconsistent with the liberty of the people, the freedom of religious worship, and hostile to the genius and spirit of our government. If the argument were worth any thing, all the laws which have christianity for their object—all would be carried away at one fell swoop—the act against cursing and swearing, and breach of the Lord's day; the act forbidding incestuous marriages, perjury by taking a false oath upon the book, \* \* \*, *et peccatum illud horribile non nominandum inter christianos*—for all these are founded on christianity—all these are restraints upon civil liberty—edicts of religious and civic tyranny, 'when enlightened notions of the rights of man were not so universally diffused as at the present day.' \* \* \* Christianity, general christianity is, and always has been a part of the common law of Pennsylvania."

The prescribed form of oath, as administered in our courts of justice, bears testimony equally clear in favor of this view. This holds especially true of that exceedingly impressive form by the uplifted hand, by which members of the denomination of Covenanters, and others having conscientious objections to the kissing of the evangelists, as a supposed relic of superstition, are adjured. "You do swear by Almighty God, the searcher of all hearts, that the evidence which you will give &c.—shall be the truth &c.—and that as you shall answer to God at the great day."

To the same effect is the statute against perjury, resting so manifestly upon a christian foundation, that the import of its testimony will hardly be disputed. With these references then, we may let the proofs afforded by the laws of the land rest, although if it were necessary they might be indefinitely multiplied.

What now is the sum of all this testimony? Here is a Nation, with the first breath of its political existence, proclaiming its faith in God as the Creator, Governor and Judge of the world, and solemnly pledging itself to act in subserviency to His will; prostrating itself in humble supplication at His throne of grace, at which the ordained ministers of Protestant Evangelical Chris-

tian denominations are called to lead it solemn devotions; honoring by special enactments in its favor, and by universal cessation from all national labor, (excepting in one case, in which unavoidable necessity is the professed apology) the Christian Sabbath; covering with the broad shield of statute protection, the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, so that none of its citizens may blaspheme the same with impunity; establishing a christian form of oath; and making, in a word the moral code of christianity, the grand basis of the common law of the land! Is this an infidel Nation? Can scoffers at the christian religion, and indeed at all religion, claim a Government making such professions, and retaining and enforcing such laws, as neutral ground? Is this a Mohammedan Nation? Would any of our courts of justice decide that the statute against blasphemy, meant to protect Mohammed and the Koran against profanity, as much as the Gospel and the Lord Jesus Christ? Is it a Jewish or a Pagan nation, and could its constitutions, and its laws, be plead as impartially favorable to all alike? But if it is manifestly neither of these, by what name shall we designate its religious character? The only answer to this inquiry, corresponding fairly with the facts in the case is—by the title, *Christian, Protestant, Evangelical*.

That the acknowledged and specially favored religion of our nation is *Christian*, in distinction from Jewish, Greek, Mohammedan, and Pagan, will need no further elucidation.

But it is also *Protestant*. The christianity which our constitutions and our laws recognize, and avowedly favor, is that which bears the plain impress of tolerant Protestantism. Indeed they favor and guaranty by express enactment, the most enlarged religious toleration, which is at all consistent with the maintenance of religion under any form. They make every citizen easy and secure in the enjoyment of his convictions, so that each one is free to worship God (but not to blaspheme Him, and revile His word) according to the dictate of his conscience. This now is in blunt opposition to the tyrannical intolerance of the doctrines of Popery, (and wherever circumstances allow it, of its practice too) as also of that phase of nominal Protestantism, which is Popery in disguise. For if decrees of councils, and authorized exponents of doctrine mean any thing, and above all if the testimony of thirty generations, deprived of their religious liberties and personal rights by Papal usurpations, is to be counted worthy of a hearing, Popery is not, and so long as it remains true to its fundamental principles, cannot be otherwise than the implacable foe of civil liberty and spiritual toleration. But this

being so, then so long as the solemn guaranties given in Bills of Rights, and State constitutions, by which the government and their constituents are mutually pledged to the perpetual maintenance of political and religious freedom, are kept inviolate, so long must the United States stand in avowed hostility to the arrogant pretensions of the Vatican. Neither does this at all conflict with the civil privileges enjoyed by Roman Catholic citizens in common with all others. For in the first place a man in this country may be a member of the church bearing that name, and yet not be a Papist, in the strict sense; may be, in reference to his political creed, as truly Republican as the sincerest Protestant. Of such we would fain hope there are many thousands in the land. But even upon the supposition that he is at heart a Papist, he cannot be such to the cognizance of the Government; for before ever he can enjoy the privileges of an American citizen, he must, by oath, renounce all allegiance to the temporal authority of Rome, and bow to the supreme sovereignty of the constitution and laws of the Government. Until therefore the Papacy alters its creed, nay even tears away the very corner-stone of its peculiar ecclesiastical political system, renounces all claims to civil power, acknowledges its past errors in having violently forced upon men its spiritual yoke, and proclaims liberty to men, in the exercise of those civil and moral rights which reason and revelation plainly grant them, it cannot but acknowledge that the predominant spirit of our political institutions, and many of their explicit enactments are in decided hostility to its most prominent peculiarities.

But if, for the reasons assigned, our Government must be denominated *Christian Protestant*, there are also good grounds for further styling it *Evangelical*. Not by any means that we would claim the United States as a champion of some particular form of christian orthodoxy. We have seen on the contrary, that it is the settled policy of the Government, not to interfere with the denominational peculiarities of the land. But in so far as it has been thought requisite or expedient to legislate at all upon the subject, the action of the Government has been unequivocally favorable to some of the general tenets by which evangelical christianity is characterized. In support of this assertion, we need only refer again to the constitutional provision made by several of the States, (including Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, North and South Carolina, and Pennsylvania) in reference to qualifications for office. The provision in the constitution of the last named State is so pointedly explicit, as to have occasioned great offence

to those holding the view which is therein virtually condemned. It is found in Art. IX Sect. 4—"That no person who acknowledges the being of a God, and a future state of rewards and punishments, shall, on account of his religious sentiments be disqualified to hold any office, or place of trust or profit under this Commonwealth." And it is assuredly significant that *this article was retained, unamended, in the revised constitution of 1838.* This did not happen through accidental oversight. The provision was felt to be sorely obnoxious to some classes of citizens. Numerous petitions were poured in upon the convention, praying for its abrogation. These petitions were warmly advocated by two or three of the ablest members of the body. Earnest attempts were made to defeat it by amendments. One proposed, in lieu of the original article, to substitute: "That no person who acknowledges the being of a God, and his own accountability to the Supreme Being, shall on account of his religious sentiments, be disqualified, &c." Another, assuming still more neutral ground, proposed that, "The civil and political rights, privileges or capacities, of any citizen, shall in no wise be diminished or enlarged, on account of his religion." Long and eloquent addresses were delivered, by the friends of these amendments, in defence of religious toleration, and political rights. But all was of no avail. This last quoted amendment was rejected by a vote of 88 against 16, the other by a vote of 85 against 26, and the original article was finally adopted, without alteration. This therefore is the present law of the State, and indicates the disposition of our constitution and laws upon this particular point. It may merely be added that this general principle so far prevails in ordinary practice as to exclude from our courts of Justice the testimony of all persons who hold views conflicting with it.

Having already examined the bearings of the statute against blasphemy, it will not be necessary to cite it here again. If however these two peculiarities simply, of our constitution and laws be candidly considered, they will be found abundantly to sustain our position. For it must be clear that provisions like these could only be designed to secure the State, against the moral influence of infidelity, or skeptical christianity, in the particular forms thus virtually condemned. It is sheer sophistry to plead, that such enactments are as favorable to Judaism, or Mohammedanism, as to Christianity,—when all the circumstances of the case, duly weighed, will prove that they were expressly designed for the protection of this last.

If therefore the Constitutional provisions, and Legislative en-



actments, rigidly enforced by the judicial decisions of a Government, must be admitted as valid evidence of its general religious character, or as proofs of the particular system of religious doctrines which it may favor, then it must be conceded, that the religion of the United States, is *Christian, Protestant, and Evangelical*.

Although this article has already exceeded the limits within which it was intended to confine it, we must beg indulgence for a few concluding reflections.

It seems then after all, that the founders of our Government, and the framers of our Constitutions and Laws, did not shrink from the responsibility of committing the nation in favor of the great and fundamental doctrines of Christianity. They did not consider it an infraction upon civil liberty, or the rights of conscience, to have such sentiments adopted and avowed, by the State, as might give mankind unequivocally to understand the position maintained by the American Republic in reference to religion. There is indeed no formal creed—no stately establishment. Every thing is done, on the contrary, to prevent a union of Church and State. And we may well be glad of it. But whilst this extreme is avoided, the other of utterly discountenancing religion is equally shunned. It was well understood by those wise, and brave, and good men, that as there was a political medium between tyranny and anarchy, so there was also a religious medium, for the State, between a pampered establishment and national infidelity. In both cases they sought and found the desired medium. And their ready adoption of it teaches us that, if their political creed be sound, Governments have no right to act in such cases as if they were dead impersonal abstractions. That on the contrary they are invested with all the faculties and powers that render the individuals composing them responsible agents. They are subject to the same natural and moral laws, and can under no circumstances escape from their accountability to the King of kings. However loudly therefore those who deny all religion may complain, that the Government should obtrude religious doctrines upon their civil relations to it, the evil, if an evil, cannot be remedied, unless by some means the moral obligations of the State can be dissolved, without at the same time involving an utter dissolution of every moral and social bond by which civil society is held together.

But we insist upon what has been already proven, that no wrong is done by the position thus assumed, to a single upright citizen, which could possibly be redressed, without inflicting greater wrong upon ten thousand others. They who would

have our constitution and laws stripped of every feature by which they are allied to christianity, can surely not reflect upon the import of their demands. If they did, it seems to us that the injustice and absurdity of them would become so manifest, that they would be instantly abandoned. For to name no other consideration, the fact that their demand, if granted, would disfranchise fourteen millions of our citizens, for the sake of accommodating the provisions of the Government to the irreligious fancies of a few thousand, would be sufficient to condemn it.

Such then being the actual position of our Government upon this subject, we see no reason why it should not be freely proclaimed. Rather is it due to the nation, to mankind, and to religion, to give full and clear utterance to the fact. It is due to religion that this should be done; for if our country owes its greatness mainly to Christianity, then it is just that He should have the praise, to whose Divine goodness we are indebted for the blessings of the Gospel. It is due to the nation that this should be done; for if a nation is responsible for its moral influence, it has a right assuredly to ask, that its provisions and enactments in favor of truth, morality, and righteousness, be publicly proclaimed without reserve. And again this is due to mankind; for as the mutual moral and social dependencies of individuals extend to nations, each separate nation owes the full weight of its moral influence in favor of social virtue and happiness, to all the rest.

Instead therefore of tamely and tacitly yielding the assumptions of unbelievers and ultra-liberalists upon this point, why should not all who are concerned for the true honor and welfare of our country, rather be zealous in securing for her, as well as for humanity and truth, the full advantage of this her true position in reference to christianity? Why should the whole weight of our national influence be allowed to go, without contradiction, against the world's highest and truest life? Why should our own children be compelled to contend, in their moral development, against the force of this additional impediment? Why should strangers of other climes and of utterly different religions, be enticed to make our land their home, under the false impression that they can here enjoy a degree of freedom from all moral or religious limitations, which no civil Government could grant, without thereby laying a ruinous train for its own ultimate explosion? It is indeed the glory of our Republic, to be the asylum for the oppressed of all nations, to which the wronged may flee for refuge from the relentless persecutions of civil and religious tyranny. But because it is thus

an *asylum* for the suffering, no one has a right to convert it into a *sewer* for the abandoned and depraved.

*Easton, Pa.*

J. H. A. B.

## THE APOSTLE PETER.

[An extract from Schaff's Church History.]

### *His Character.*

SIMON, according to his old name, or according to his new one PETER, was the son of the fisherman Jonas, (Matth. iv: 18, xvi: 17, John i: 43, xxi: 16), born in Bethsaida of Galilee (John i: 45), and settled at Capernaum (Matth. viii: 14, Luke iv: 38), where he pursued himself his father's business. His brother Andrew, a disciple of John the Baptist, first brought him to Jesus, by whom he was called to become a fisher of men (Matth. iv: 18 ff. Mark i: 16 ff. John i: 41 f.). From the time of that miraculous draught of fishes, which served to overwhelm him at once with the sense of his majesty and power and with the feeling of his own weakness and sinfulness (Luke v: 3 ff.), he gave himself up entirely to his service, and with John and the elder James stood ever after in the nearest intimacy with his person, being along with them a witness of the transfiguration on Tabor and of the awful conflict of Gethsemane. Among these three moreover he appears evidently the most prominent. He is the proper "organ of the entire apostolic college,"<sup>1</sup> he speaks and acts in their name. While the contemplative self-communing John lay in mysterious silence on Jesus' breast, the more practical and active Peter was never able to conceal his inmost nature; it comes everywhere involuntarily to light, so that we are thus better acquainted both with his virtues and faults from the evangelical narrative, than we are with those of any other apostle. With the most ardent devotion he gives himself up to the Saviour, and confesses in the name of his fellow dis-

<sup>1</sup> So Chrysostom styles him, in Joann. homil. 68, where he says of him: *θεμελιος ἐν τῷ ἀποστόλῳ καὶ στήλην τῶν μαθητῶν καὶ κεντρὸν τοῦ σώματος.*

ciples that he is the Messiah, the Son of the living God (Matth. xvi: 16). Soon after he undertakes, with unbecoming familiarity and unconscious presumption, to administer to him a rebuke, and to dissuade him from the course of suffering which was required for the redemption of the world (Matth. xvi: 22). On the mount of transfiguration he is bent prematurely on building tabernacles, to perpetuate the happiness he felt in a simply outward way (Matth. xvii: 4). At the feet-washing, his high-minded modesty leads him to make himself wiser than his Master: "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?—Thou shalt never wash my feet!" (John xiii: 6, 8). What a remarkable mixture of glowing love to Christ and rash self-reliance proclaims itself in his vow, shortly before the scene in the garden: "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended!—Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee!" (Matth. xxvi: 23, 25). What a stormy inconsiderate and carnal zeal he displays in Gethsemane itself, where he grasps the sword instead of preparing himself meekly to suffer (John xviii: 10)! Soon after followed his deep deplorable fall, when through fear of men and love of life he became untrue to his Master. In the hand of God, however, this was to serve the purpose of bringing him by bitter experience to the knowledge of his own weakness, to heartfelt humiliation, and to the settlement of his strength in a better form on God's grace alone. The Lord did not forsake him; he prayed that his faith should not fail (Luke xxiii: 32), restored him again after his resurrection to the pastoral office of which he had rendered himself unworthy by his fall, and gave him the charge of his sheep and lambs. He had to meet indeed a severe trial first in the thrice repeated inquiry: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me—lovest thou me more than these?" by which, to fill him with contrition and shame, the Saviour reminded him of his threefold denial and of the way in which he had exalted himself before above his fellow disciples. We find his pride now bowed down, his ardor purified; he ventured no more to place himself above the rest, but submitted the measure of his love to the Searcher of hearts, being well assured that he loved him and recognizing in this love the very element of his life, but at the same time painfully sensible that he did not love him as he ought and as he gladly would (John xxi: 15 ff.). That he allowed himself even after this to be hurried by the impulse of the moment into inconsistent conduct, is shown by the occasion which drew on him Paul's rebuke at Antioch (Gal. ii: 11, 14). This whole occasion also however he had grace to improve to his own humilia-

tion, keeping in view continually the last prophetic word of his Master, that he must walk in the way of self-denial and complete his obedience and faithfulness finally by suffering without any will of his own (John xxi: 19). For otherwise we find, that before the people and the chief council, and in view of the greatest danger, he confessed his faith without fear, and maintained his love towards the Lord with fidelity through all toil and hardship even to martyrdom itself in the most excruciating form, amply justifying thus the honor bestowed upon him by his new name (Acts iii: 1-26 iv: 1-22, v: 17-41, xii: 3-17).

These traits from the life of Simon Peter give us a picture, in which great natural gifts and excellencies are strikingly combined with peculiar defects. He is distinguished from the other eleven disciples by a fiery, excitable, choleric-sanguine temperament, by an open, clearly intellectual, practical nature, bold self-reliance, prompt readiness for action, and a considerable talent for representation and church government. He is prepared at all times to speak out his mind and heart, to come to purpose and deed. This natural constitution itself, however, exposed him strongly to the temptation of vanity, self-confidence and ambition. His excitable, impulsive nature ran very easily into a false estimate of his own powers, by which he was in danger of being thrown off his guard, and so of being carried just as easily away for the moment, in seasons of temptation, by impressions of a quite opposite sort. This explains his denial of the Lord, notwithstanding the joyful firmness that characterised the profession of his faith at other times. In *depth* of knowledge and love he falls short doubtless of a Paul and a John, and he was not so well fitted as they were accordingly for the business of completion. His strength lay in the fire of immediate inspiration, in promptness of speech and action, and in an imposing authoritative manner which at once commanded respect and obedience. He was a born church prince, and his gifts were admirably suited, after proper purification by the Spirit of Christ, for the business of beginning, for the first formation and ordering of the christian community.

#### *The Position of Peter in Church History.*

What has now been said indicates the place and significance of this apostle in the history of the Church, as determined by his natural qualifications, sanctified by the Holy Ghost and made to stand in the service of the truth. The Lord knew what was

in him from the first, and at his first calling even, with reference to his subsequent activity, bestowed upon him the name *Cephas*, in the later Hebrew dialect, or *Peter*, as translated into Greek, signifying Rock (John i: 43, Mark iii: 16). This name of honor he confirmed to him a year later, and connected with it the remarkable promise which has become an occasion of strife in church history. Whilst other people took Jesus at best for a forerunner of the Messiah, and so for a mere man only however highly distinguished, Simon apprehended and confessed first with the full energy of living faith the great central mystery, the fundamental article of Christianity, namely the Messiahship of his Master, the absolute union of the divine and human and the fulness of all life in the person of Jesus of Nazareth; in an hour of crisis and sifting, in which many became apostate, he proclaimed, in the name of all his fellow disciples, from the inmost sanctuary of experience and with the emphasis of the most sure and firm conviction, this good confession: "Thou art the Christ"—the Anointed of God, the long promised and earnestly expected Messiah—"the Son of the living God!" (Matth. xvi: 16, comp. Mark viii: 29, Luke ix: 20); or according to the somewhat fuller text of John: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God!" (John vi: 66-69). On the ground of this primitive christian creed, this triumphant saving confession of faith, which flesh and blood had not revealed to him, that is, neither his own nature nor any other man, as formerly his brother Andrew (John i: 42, 43), but the Father in heaven, the Lord pronounced him blessed and said: "*Thou art Peter (Rock, a man of rock,) and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*" (Matth. xvi: 18). The rich word-play of the Greek original, οὗ ἐς Πέτρος καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ, can be fully rendered again only in French: "*tu es Pierre, et sur cette pierre.*"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Our Lord of course employed the Aramæan ܐܬܝܢܐ, which was translated by πέτρος instead of the more usual πέτρα, and for the reason doubtless that the name of a man was to be expressed, and that the masculine form was otherwise in use for such purpose (Leont. Schol. 18, Fabric. biblioth. gr. xi, 334). With the classics πέτρος signifies properly a stone, πέτρα a large rock. This distinction however is not steadily observed, and in the passage before us it is quite disregarded, since the Greek word must correspond with the Hebrew original which always means rock. In figurative speech πέτρα is employed by the classics also to denote firmness and stability, for instance by Homer, Odys. xvii, 463, but more frequently for hardness of heart and want of feeling.

In the interpretation of this passage, two false views are to be avoided. On the one side the promise may not be disjoined from the confession, and attached simply to the *person* of Simon as such.<sup>1</sup> For, in the first place, the name "Peter" v: 18, stands opposed to the original name "Simon Bar-jona" v: 17, and denotes thus the new spiritual man, into which the old Simon was partly transformed already and partly still to be transformed more and more, by the Spirit of Christ. And then again, the Lord himself directly after says to the same apostle, (Matth. xvi: 23), indulging his natural spirit: "Get thee behind me, *Satan* (evil counsellor, adversary,) thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." He had undertaken namely in truth with the most well meaning and good natured intention, but still with shortsighted carnality and presumption, to dissuade his Master from the way of the cross, which was indispensably required for the salvation of the world.—Just as unreasonable is it, on the other side, when many Protestant theologians sunder the "*petra*" from the previous "*Peter*," and make it to refer wholly to the *confession* in v: 16. For this plainly destroys the beautiful and significant play of the words, as well as the sense of *ταύτη* which necessarily refers to the "*Peter*" going just before. And besides, the Church of Christ is not built upon abstract doctrine and confession, but upon living persons as the bearers of truth.

Rather the words "Thou art a Rock, &c.," are by all means to be referred indeed to Peter, but only to him as he comes before us in the immediate connexion of the text, that is to the renovated Peter, so far as the mystery of the Incarnation has come to be revealed to him by God (v: 16 and 17), to Peter the courageous confessor of the Saviour's Divinity, in one word to *Peter in Christ*; and the sense is accordingly: "I appoint thee as the living witness of this fundamental truth which thou hast now acknowledged, to the first and leading agency in the founding of my Church." Our Lord describes thus the *official character* of this apostle, and prophesies to him his *future place in church history*. The believing and boldly witnessing Peter appears here as the foundation stone, Christ himself as the builder of that glorious spiritual structure, which no hostile power can destroy. In the absolute sense Christ is indeed called the foundation (*θεμελίον*) of the Church, besides which no other can be

<sup>1</sup> Then we should have in Greek rather: *ἐν εἰ τὸν πέτρον*.



laid (1 Cor. iii: 11); but in a secondary or relative sense so are the Apostles also, whom he employed as his instruments. Hence it is said of the saints Eph. ii: 20, that they are built "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets (*ἐπὶ τ. θεμελίῳ τῶν ἀποστόλων κ. προφ.*), Jesus Christ being himself the chief corner-stone; and hence also the twelve foundations (*θεμελίαι*) of the new Jerusalem bear the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb (Rev. xxi: 14). If now the Apostles in general are the human founders of the Church, under the guidance of course of the Holy Ghost, as Christ's ministers and "laborers together with God" (1 Cor. iii: 9), the true Builder—this holds of Peter, as their representative and leader, in a sense altogether peculiar.

This view is supported accordingly also by the Acts of the Apostles, the first twelve chapters of which form a continuous commentary on the prophetic word of Christ Matth. xvi: 18. If even before the Resurrection Peter stands at the head of the apostolic college,<sup>1</sup> he is still more plainly after it, till Paul comes on the stage, the leading spirit, the acting and speaking organ of the entire christian body. He plays the principal part at the election of Matthias to fill the place of Judas, on the day of Pentecost, at the healing of the lame man, and in the punishment of Ananias; he it was, who more than any one else extended the Church by word and deed in Judea and Samaria, boldly defended the christian cause before the sanhedrim, and refused to be deterred from doing so even by chains and bonds; and as he stood at the head of the Jewish mission, so also did he lay the foundation of the mission among the Gentiles by the baptism of Cornelius without previous circumcision. In short, on to the apostolic council at Jerusalem, a. 50 (Acts xv), Peter is without question the most important personage in the church, and asserts a primacy, which so clearly belongs to him by his natural qualifications as well as by the prophetic word of his Master, and is so fully confirmed by manifold facts in the sacred narrative, that only the most blind party spirit can explain, without in the least justifying however, the headstrong humor which affects to deny it.<sup>2</sup> But we meet with no trace ever of hierar-

<sup>1</sup> As appears from every list given of the Apostles, as well as from many other passages: Matth. x, 2 ff. xiv, 28, xvi, 16-19, xvii, 4, 26, 28, xviii, 21 xix, 27, Mark iii, 16 ff., viii, 29, ix, 2, xiv, 23, Luke vi, 14, ff., xii, 41, xxii, 31 ff., John vi, 68, xxi, 15 ff., &c.

<sup>2</sup> Of course nothing follows still from this concession for the known pretensions of the Papacy, since these rest not simply by any means on the fact here noticed, but on two other suppositions also which are not to be

chical pretension on this ground in the later history of Peter, who describes himself rather quite modestly as a "co-presbyter and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and exhorts the elders to feed the flock of Christ, not in the spirit of covetousness and ambition, but with the pattern of a godly life (1 Peter v: 1-3). Then again, the supremacy never came into collision with the independence of the other apostles, in their proper spheres of labor, and did not pretend to keep pace with the universal spread of the church, or at least did not stretch itself with like authority over every part. From the council of Jerusalem on, Peter appears no longer, but James, at the head of the congregation in that city and of the strict Jewish-Christian party. On the field of the mission to the Gentiles, and of the first literature of christianity, he was completely overshadowed by the later called Paul (comp. 1 Cor. xv, 10); who sustains to him, according to the representation of the same book of Acts that places Peter so high in the beginning, a similar relation, so to speak, with that of the rising sun to the setting moon. At all events his position with regard to him was one of the most perfect independence, as is shown abundantly by the first two chapters even of the Epistle to the Galatians. The last stadium in the pro-

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proved directly from the New Testament. The first is, that the primacy of Peter allowed *transmission*. This however is not merely without a syllable of mention, but is at once also rendered improbable by the fact that all other surnames given to the apostles express purely *personal* gifts and *personal* relations—as the epithet "Sons of Thunder" given to James and John (Mark iii, 17), the "Zealot" to the other Simon (Luke vi, 15, Acts i, 13), and the "Traitor" to Judas Iscariot (Luke vi, 16). That the same held good of the peculiar position of Peter, was a widely prevalent view in the ancient Church. So Firmilianus, bishop of Neo-cæsarea in Cappadocia, a cotemporary of Cyprian, among other things reproaches the Roman bishop Stephen in the name of the Asiatic bishops with wishing to bring in, instead of the *one* rock on which Christ had built his Church, *many* rocks, by extending the prerogative of Peter to all his successors (Cyp. Epist. 75. "Atque ego in hac parte juste indignor ad hanc tam apertam et manifestam Stephani stultitiam, quod, qui sic de episcopatus sui jure gloriatur et se successionem Petri tenere contendit, super quem fundamenta Ecclesie collocata sunt, *multas alias petras* inducat). The second supposition of the Papacy which cannot be proved, is that Peter *actually did transmit* his primacy, and this not say to the bishop of Antioch, or of Jerusalem where at least he spent many years, but to the bishop of Rome, where at best he could have held the episcopal office only for a very short time, and this not in the *later* church sense. Finally however, if it even stood better with both these arguments, there would be a huge difference still, between the purely spiritual superiority of Peter, with his exercise of it, and the ecclesiastico-secular primacy of the Pope in the form in which this is now asserted.

gress of the Apostolical Church, finally, after the death of Peter and Paul, it devolved on John properly alone to lead and with his genius to complete. But who besides can even for a moment bear the thought, which flows necessarily from the Roman view of the *enduring* force of the Petrine primacy, that the beloved disciple, who leaned on the breast of the God-man, was subject to the bishop of Rome, a Linus or a Clemens, as the successor and heir of Peter's authority, or that this last exercised a papal supremacy over the first? The special position which was assigned to Peter had regard thus manifestly to the work of *laying the foundation* of the Apostolical Church, and there is room to speak of it as of perpetual and universal force by succession, only so far as the gifts of all the *other* apostles perpetuate themselves in the christian world, and as they may be said, by their past deeds as well as by the unbroken action of their word and spirit, to condition the progressive character of the church in every stage of its history.

#### *Peter in Rome.*

It is the unanimous testimony of tradition that Peter suffered martyrdom in Rome under Nero. This testimony was indeed in a short time obscured by all sorts of unhistorical and in part directly contradictory embellishments, and has been abused by the Roman hierarchy in support of boundless pretensions, on which account the truth of it has been at times called in question, out of polemical zeal against the papacy<sup>1</sup> and partly from historical skepticism;<sup>2</sup> but by the great body of Protestant historians we find it always acknowledged as in its main substance at least entitled to credit.<sup>3</sup> We will notice first the main voices

<sup>1</sup> Particularly by the Hollander *Frederick Spanheim*, who in his celebrated "Dissertatio de facta profectione Petri Apostoli in urbem Romam, deque non una traditionis origine," first brought the matter from the year 1679 to a thorough inquiry, and endeavored by critical trial of the evidence to establish the doubts in regard to Peter's sojourn at Rome, which had been before thrown out by the Waldenses and certain declared enemies of the Papacy, such as Marsilius of Padua, Michael of Caesena, Matthias Flacius and Claudius Salmasius. He derived the story mainly from the ambition of the Roman Church.

<sup>2</sup> Namely by the modern hypercritics, *Baur*, in several articles of the *Tübingen Zeitschrift* and in his work on Paul p. 212 ff. and *Schwegler*, *Nachap. Zeitalter*, I, p. 301 ff. They derive the story from the jealousy of the Roman Jewish Christians towards the Pauline Gentile Christians, an effort to set the Jewish apostle Peter above Paul. So *de Wette*, *Einl. in's N. T.* p. 314.

<sup>3</sup> Namely by all the older Reformed theologians who have devoted special

of the tradition on the subject, then try to determine the probable length of Peter's residence at Rome, and finally examine the statements made concerning the manner of his death.

*The testimonies in regard to Peter's settlement in Rome.*

The oldest is that of Peter himself in the date of his abode subscribed to his first Epistle, taken according to its oldest interpretation, c. v: 13: "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you, and so doth Marcus my son (the Evangelist)." True, the sense of *Babylon* here is controverted. Neander, Steiger, de Wette, Wieseler and others, understand by it the celebrated Babylon or Babel on the Euphrates. The prophecy of the Hebrew prophet against this great city (Is. xiii: 19ff., xiv: 4, 12, xlvi: 1f.) had been indeed terribly fulfilled, and it presented to view in the time of the Apostles, as Strabo, Pausanias and Pliny with one voice assure us, only a scene of ruins (*οὐδὲν ἔμνη τεῖχος*), a desolation (*solitudo*).<sup>1</sup> Still it may be assumed surely, that some portion of it yet remained habitable, and as we know that there were many thousands and Jews in the satrapy of Babylon,<sup>2</sup> the case in and of itself allows the supposition that Peter may have chosen just this region as the seat of his labors. But if so, we might reasonably expect that some trace would have been preserved of his activity there afterwards. Tradition however knows nothing of a sojourn of Peter in the kingdom of Parthia, while yet it follows there the steps of the apostle Thomas.<sup>3</sup> Then again, it is scarcely possible to explain, on this interpretation, the acquaintance

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study and inquiry to the field of ecclesiastical antiquities, then by Schröckh, Mynter, Gieseler, Neander, (who however in the latest edition of his work on the Acts, staggered apparently somewhat by the argument of Baur, speaks no longer so decidedly in favor of the tradition as before,) by Credner, Bleek, Olshausen and Wieseler (in the second excursus of his chronology), not to mention a number of others who have not entered into any close investigation of the subject.

<sup>1</sup> See the passages in Meyerhoff's Einl. in die petrin. Schriften (1835) p. 129.

<sup>2</sup> Josephus Antiq. xv, 3, 1, Philo de legat. ad Caj. p. 587. True, Josephus also informs us xviii, 9, 8, that under the emperor Caligula many Jews from fear of persecution removed from Babylon to Seleucia, and that the rest were driven away five years after by a pestilence. They might however very well have returned again before the date of Peter's Epistle, as Caligula was already dead a. 41.

<sup>3</sup> Origen in Eusebius Hist. Eccl. III, 1.

which our Epistle is acknowledged to show with the later Epistles of Paul, since between Babylon and the Roman empire there was but little communication. Equally hard to understand would be Peter's association with Mark (v: 13), since this last in the years 61-63 was in Rome (Col. iv: 10, Philem. 23), and shortly after is supposed to be in Asia Minor, from whence he is again called to Rome by Paul a short time before his martyrdom (2 Tim. iv: 11). If he followed this invitation, as we have a right to suppose, he could not so readily find his way again to the banks of the Euphrates. The case however becomes quite simple, if Peter himself about that time or soon after came to Rome and there wrote his epistle.—These difficulties constrain us to return to the earliest and in ancient times only prevalent interpretation of Babylon, by which it is taken to mean *Rome*. This is known to be its sense in the Apocalypse, as even Roman Catholic expositors allow, c. xiv: 8, xvi: 19, xvii: 5, xviii: 2, 10, 21, comp. the allusion xvii: 9 to the seven hills, and xvii: 18, to the universal dominion of Rome.<sup>1</sup> It has been objected indeed, that this symbolical designation of the metropolis of paganism suits well enough for a prophetic poetical book, such as the Apocalypse, but not for the prose style of a common letter. But this objection is completely borne down by the following considerations in favor of the figurative sense: namely, 1. The unanimous testimony of the ancient church;<sup>2</sup> 2. The analogy of the other titles in the form of salutation, which require to be taken also figuratively. Neander will have it indeed, that “*συνηλεκτη*” is to be understood of Peter's wife, and that “*Marcus my son*” stands for his son literally according to the flesh.<sup>3</sup> But although the apostle according to 1 Cor. ix: 5, did take his wife along with him in his missionary journeys, the mention of her in an official circular, and particularly to churches with which according to Neander's view he had no personal acquaintance, would still be certainly out of place and without all analogy in christian antiquity; and we

<sup>1</sup> In the same way in a fragment of the Sibylline Books, supposed to belong to the first century, (v: 143, 159) Rome is called Babylon.

<sup>2</sup> So already *I'apias* or *Clemens Alex.* in Euseb. 11, 15, the subscription of the Epistle, *Jerome* catal. s. Petr., *Occumenius*, &c. The allusion to Rome is held also, though not with all on the same grounds, by *Grotius*, *Lardner*, *Cave*, *Semler*, *Hitzig*, *Baur*, *Schwiegler*, *Thiersch*.

<sup>3</sup> *Apostelgesch.* II, 8, 590, Anm. 4. So also *Mill*, *Bengel*, *Meyerhoff*. On the other hand *Steiger*, *de Wette*, and *Wiesner*, though they take Babylon literally, refer *συνηλεκτη* still to the church in that place and “*Marcus*” to the Evangelist.

see not besides, how *συνεκλεκτῇ* should just of itself express the notion of a wife, nor why in that case the clause *ἐν Βαβυλῶνι* is added just in this grammatical connection. All these difficulties disappear, if we supply *ἐκκλησία* and understand by it the christian congregation, as is done already by the Peschito and the Vulgate. So far as Mark is concerned, tradition knows nothing of a son of Peter according to the flesh by any such name.<sup>1</sup> It is altogether natural, on the other hand, to understand here the well known missionary assistant of Paul and Peter, the Evangelist of this name, who sprang from Jerusalem and had been probably converted by Peter (Acts xii: 12ff.), but at the same time formed also a bond of connection between him and the Apostle of the Gentiles, as did Silvanus likewise the bearer of the Epistle. If we are required thus, in harmony with the older expositors, to take *υἱὸς* tropically according to the familiar usage of the N. T. (comp. 1 Cor. iv: 16-18, Gal. iv: 19, 1 Thes. i: 2, 18, 2 Tim. i: 2, ii: 1), and to refer *συνεκλεκτῇ* to the congregation, it forms an argument in favor of the symbolical sense also of Babylon. Nay, we find just in this combination of the two terms a significant contrast, particularly under the oppressed condition in which the christians are regarded as standing. The Apostle speaks of the churches to whom he writes as "elect" (*ἐκλεκτοί* 1. 2.), and so now also of the church from whose midst he writes as "co-elect," chosen of God to everlasting life in the very seat of the deepest Pagan corruption, that must necessarily call up to a writer in particular like Peter, so thoroughly imbued with the prophetic style of the Old Testament, the description which is there given of the ancient Babylon. If we assume moreover that the epistle was written in the later years of Nero, when cruelty and tyranny were in full force, and shortly before the terrible scenes of Nero's persecution, at a time thus when the Christians, as the letter itself and the testimony of Tacitus show, had already become the object of foul suspicion and outrageous calumny,—it must be allowed that the symbolical designation of Rome, which Silvanus could easily explain to the readers in case they should not at once understand it, falls in very well with the entire contents and circumstances of the communication. The naming of Rome literally would have been clearly in this connection far less characteristic.

<sup>1</sup> *Clement Alex.* speaks indeed in a general way of Peter's having children. Strom. III. f. 448: Πῆρὸς μὲν γὰρ καὶ Φίλιππος ἱεροδοκῆσαντες, and tradition names a daughter, Petronilla, (comp. Acta Sanct. 30 May); but no Marcus is ever mentioned as his son.

To pass on now to the apostolical fathers, the Roman bishop *Clement*, a disciple of Paul, informs us indeed that Peter after having endured many sufferings died as a martyr, but gives neither the place nor the manner of his death; probably because it came not in his way, and was something which he could consider as generally known.<sup>1</sup> For wherever else the place of Peter's martyrdom is mentioned, it is always Rome, and no other church laid claim to this honor, although it was a great point with the churches then to possess distinguished martyrs.—Omitting the testimony of *Papias* in a somewhat obscure passage in *Eusebius* (II, 15), the Epistle of his cotemporary *Ignatius* to the Romans takes for granted that Peter had preached to them;<sup>2</sup> as does also a fragment from the *Prædicatio Petri*, which belongs to the beginning of the second century.<sup>3</sup> Still more distinctly *Dionysius*, bishop of Corinth, (about a. 170), in his Epistle to the Romans, speaks of the *Roman* and Corinthian churches as the common planting of Peter and Paul, and adds: "For both taught alike in our Corinth when they planted us, and both also in Italy at the same place (ὁμοῦσε, which can be understood in its connection only of Rome), after teaching there suffered alike at the same time the death of martyrdom."<sup>4</sup> That Peter is here styled one of the founders of the Corinthian church is indeed in any case very inaccurate, and possibly may be drawn simply from a misunderstanding of what Paul says 1 Cor. i: 12 of the party of Cephas, whose existence in this church implies some relation to it at least indirectly on his part. But we have no right on account of this error to reject the whole state-

<sup>1</sup> In his first Epistle to the Corinthians, which belongs still to the second half of the 1st cent., c. 5: Πέτρος διὰ ἡλθον ἀδικον οὐκ ἴνα, δοτὶ θεοὶ ἀλλὰ πλεονας ὑπεμεινεν (according to others ὑπὲρμενεν) πάντας καὶ ὅσους μαρτυρήσας ἐπορεύθη εἰς τὸν ἀφειλόμενον τόπον τῆς ἐδῆς. Then follows a more full and definite testimony in regard to the end of Paul. The word μαρτυρήσας is to be understood here probably in its original sense of witnessing by word, as in the passage immediately following, and not in the sense of martyrdom as it is usually taken. The last follows however out of the whole context, particularly the clause going just before which *Clement* then illustrates by examples: διὰ ἡλθον καὶ φθόνον οἱ μέγιστοι καὶ δικαιοτάτοι στίλοι ἐβιάσθησαν, καὶ ἴως θανάτου ἦλθον.

<sup>2</sup> c. 4: οὐκ ὡς Πέτρος καὶ Παῦλος διαδόσθηναι ἑμῶν.

<sup>3</sup> In *Cyp. Op.* ed. Rig. p. 139: liber qui inscribitur Pauli prædicatio (which was the last part probably of the *prædicatio Petri*, comp. *Credner's Beit. zur Einl.* I, 360), in quo libro invenies, post tanta tempora Petrum et Paulum, post conlationem evangelii in Hierusalem et mutuam altercationem et rerum agendarum dispositionem, postremo in urbe, quasi tunc primum, invicem sibi esse cognitos.

<sup>4</sup> In *Eusebius H. E.* I. II, c. 25.



ment, and it is after all possible even that Peter, after Paul's confinement, on his way perhaps to Rome, may have visited Corinth, in which case he could not indeed literally found the church but still might strengthen it and confirm it in the faith. —*Irenæus*, who stands connected through Polycarp with the Apostle John, says of Peter and Paul, that they preached the gospel and founded the church at Rome.<sup>1</sup>—Somewhat later, about the year 200, the Roman presbyter *Caius*, in his tract against the Montanist Proclus of Asia Minor, writes:<sup>2</sup> "I can however show the monuments (*τρόπαια*) of the Apostles (Peter and Paul). For if you go to the Vatican or on the way to Ostia, you will find the monuments of the men who founded this church."—*Tertullian*<sup>3</sup> congratulates the Roman church, because there Peter had been made conformable to the sufferings of Christ, (that is crucified), Paul crowned with the end of the Baptist, (that is, beheaded), and John after being plunged in seething oil, without hurt, (a fabulous addition no doubt), banished to Patmos.

These are the oldest and most important testimonies, which are drawn from the most different parts of the church. They show it is true some want of accuracy, since Peter cannot be called strictly the founder of the church at Rome. Still more are the statements we meet with in the apocryphal writings, and in the later church fathers, as *Eusebius* and *Jerome*, nay in *Clemens Alexandrinus* already (in *Euseb.* II, 15), full of fabulous embellishments, particularly in regard to Peter's meeting with Simon Magus at Rome, which rests probably on false conclusions drawn from the narration Acts viii: 18ff., and on a mistake of Justin Martyr who supposed he had seen a statue of Simon Magus in that city. But such accumulations, gathered by the onward progress of an old tradition, by no means authorize us to discard also its primary substance. This is not to be explained in the case before us certainly from the rivalry of the Roman Jewish Christians towards the Pauline Gentile Christians; for it must then have been met by these last with early decided contradiction; whereas on the contrary just the oldest witnesses for it belong mainly to the school of Paul and John. Just as little did it spring from the hierarchical ambition of the

<sup>1</sup> Adv. haer. III, 1, comp. 3, where the Roman church is spoken of as "a gloriosissimis duobus apostolis, Petro et Paulo, fundata et constituta ecclesia."

<sup>2</sup> In *Eusebius* H. E. II, 25.

<sup>3</sup> De praescr. haer. c. 36.

Roman bishops, although this soon laid hold of it indeed and used it for its own ends. Because the tradition itself is demonstrably older than the abuse of it for hierarchical purposes, and had there been any sufficient ground for calling it in question, this would certainly have been done in the first centuries by the opponents of the Roman pretensions in the Greek and African Churches. But no such contradiction was raised in any quarter, either by the Catholics or on the part of heretics and schismatics. The gigantic structure of the Papacy could never have risen, without any historical foundation, out of a pure lie; rather just the fact of the presence and martyrdom of Peter and Paul in Rome, in connection with the political position of this world-metropolis, must be taken as the indispensable main condition of its growth and the authority it gained over Christendom for so many hundred years.

*The duration of Peter's settlement at Rome.*

The questions, *when* Peter came to Rome, *how long* he labored there, and in *what capacity*, are not determined by the older testimonies. When Dionysius of Corinth, Irenæus and Caius, ascribe to Peter and Paul the joint founding of the Roman church, it is not necessary to take it chronologically, in the sense that these Apostles had brought the first knowledge of the gospel. For in such sense Paul himself was not its founder, as little as Peter was the founder of the Corinthian church, which yet the same Dionysius affirms. In fact however this expression, which in and of itself might denote merely the important part which Peter took in establishing a church of long previous standing but still in an imperfect state,<sup>1</sup> came soon to be taken exclusively in the chronological sense, whereby there arose a confusion in the tradition, favored by the silence of the N. T. in regard to the later labors of Peter. *Eusebius* is the first, who in his *Chronicon* brings our Apostle to Rome under *Claudius* already a. 42, sets him over the church there for twenty years (according to the Armenian version of the original Greek text now lost), or five and twenty (as *Jerome* gives it), and places his martyrdom in the last year of *Nero* a. 67 or 68. Resting on *Eusebius*, *Jerome* also reports, that Peter was bishop first of

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<sup>1</sup> So with full right we may speak of *Calvin* as the founder of the Reformed Church in Geneva, although the Reformation was introduced there several years before him by *Farel*.

Antioch (according to a later view for seven years), and then from the second year of Claudius, that is from a. 42 on, was bishop twenty five years of Rome;<sup>1</sup> in which representation he is followed by the older Catholic historians.<sup>2</sup>

But this view contradicts the plainest facts of the New Testament, and cannot stand a moment before the bar of criticism. The Acts of the Apostles, which describe so fully the earlier labors of Peter, allow in no case the supposition of his absence from Palestine before his imprisonment by Agrippa, Acts xii: 3, 17; and as this falls in the year of the death in Palestine (comp. Acts xi: 28, xii: 1), that is a. 44 (not a. 42, according to the wrong calculation of Eusebius), it serves at all events to set aside the chronological term of seven years for the episcopate of Antioch, as well as to shorten by several years, the quarter of a century assigned to the Roman episcopate. After his deliverance from prison, that is in the fourth year of Claudius, the Apostle might indeed possibly have travelled to Rome; as Luke remarks indefinitely, Acts xii: 17, that he departed to another place, and from this on to the Apostolic council a. 50 (c. xv.) leaves him out of sight.<sup>3</sup> But this possibility becomes at once highly im-

<sup>1</sup> De script. eccles. c. 1, Simon Petrus—post episcopatum Antiochenis ecclesiae et praedicationem dispersionis eorum, qui de circumcisione crediderant in Ponto, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia et Bithynia, secundo Claudii imperatoris anno ad expugnandum Simonem magum Romam pergit ibique viginti quinque annis cathedram sacerdotalem tenuit, usque ad ultimum annum Neronis, id est decimum quartum.

<sup>2</sup> Even the most zealous friends of the Papacy however are driven to a modification at least of the Eusebian tradition. Baronius, in his Annals (ad ann. 39. no. 25), makes Peter indeed to be 7 years bishop of Antioch and then 25 years bishop of Rome, but assumes at the same time that the Apostle was frequently absent from his see, when the N. T. facts for instance imperiously require it, and refers this to his papal dignity, or the care of the general Church devolved upon him by God. Sic videas—he says—Petrus his temporibus numquam fere eodem loco consistere, sed ut opus esse videret, peragraré provincias, invisere ecclesias, ac denique omnes quae sunt universalis praefecturae functiones pastoralis sollicitudine exequi ac consumere.

<sup>3</sup> This period accordingly the most recent acute and learned defender of the Roman tradition, Fr. Windischmann in his "Vindiciae Petrinae" Ratisb. 1836 p. 112–116, fixes upon for the first journey of Peter to Rome. With him agrees somewhat too hastily in this the Protestant theologian Thiersch, when he says in his work on the N. T. Corn. p. 105f.; "It is certain that, before the banishment of the Jews from the city by Claudius, a christian church, mainly if not wholly of Jewish origin, had been formed there. And we see not what objection of any force can be urged against the tradition, that Peter was its founder. This may well have taken place between the year 44 and a. 50 or 51, that is between Peter's flight from Jerusalem

probable, or rather almost wholly inconceivable, when it is considered that the Epistle to the Romans written a. 58 contains no hint of any previous presence of Peter in Rome, but of itself rather implies the contrary; since Paul repeatedly declares it to have been his principle, not to build on foreign ground and not to encroach on the sphere of another Apostle's labors (Rom. xv: 20, 21, 2 Cor. x: 15, 16). We must assume thus, to uphold the tradition, a twofold Roman church, one founded by Peter under Claudius, which was afterwards dissolved by his edict against the Jews, and another wholly new one gathered after the year 52 through the influence mainly of Paul. But this resort also is overthrown, when we come to think how easily the whole story of Peter's journey to Rome under the Emperor Claudius can be explained from a reigning mistake and from false reasoning. Justin Martyr namely had reported,\* that Simon Magus betook himself *under Claudius* to Rome, and there gained many followers and even divine honors, as was shown by a statue erected to him on an island in the Tiber. This statue was in fact found a. 1574 in the place described, but turned out to be a statue, not of *Simo Sanctus*, but of the Sabine Roman divinity *Semo Sancus* or *Sangus* (comp. *Ovid's* fast. vi, 213), of whom the Oriental Justin probably had never heard.<sup>2</sup> But the tradition now laid hold of this report, and sent Peter, in its zeal to glorify him as much as possible, on the heels of the supposed Samaritan arch-heretic, to vanquish him in Rome also as triumphantly as he had before done, according to Acts viii, in Samaria.<sup>3</sup> To this was added the statement of Suetonius concerning the edict of Claudius, which expelled the Jews and probably also the Jewish Christians (on account of the "*impulsore Chresto*") from Rome, presupposing consequently the existence of a christian church in the place; and since Peter was regarded as the proper founder of it, the inference followed of

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(Acts xii, 17) and the Apostolic council (c. xv), so that the banishment of the Jews from Rome precisely may have forced him also to leave that city, and led him to return to Jerusalem, where we find him when the council met."

\* Apol. maj. c. 26 and 56.

<sup>2</sup> See *Hug's* Einl. II, 69ff. *Gieseler's* K. G. I. 1 p. 64, and *Neander's* K. G. II, p. 783 (2nd ed.).

<sup>3</sup> Of this conflict notice is taken already in the Pseudo-clementine writings, particularly the Recognitions, the composition of which is to be referred to the first quarter of the third century. That *Eusebius* was guided in his chronology by the narration of Justin, to which he himself appeals, is shown clearly by his *Eccl. Hist.* II, 13-15.

itself that he had already under this emperor betaken himself to Rome. The more readily the chronological determination of Eusebius and Jerome, in regard to so early a presence of the Apostle in this city, admits of being explained in this way from erroneous combinations, the less claim can it have to be regarded as worthy of credit.

Much less still however can it be shown, that Peter was in Rome continuously, or even for any considerable period, ou from the time of Claudius. In the Acts of the Apostles and in Paul's Epistles we find on to the year 63 or 64, that is on to the salutation in his own first Epistle (v : 13), no trace of his presence in this city, but incontrovertible evidence enough of his absence from it. For in the year 50 he was in Jerusalem at the council of the Apostles (Acts xv.), and had to this time labored mainly, not among the Gentiles, of whom the greater part of the Roman church consisted according to Rom. i : 5, 7, 13, xi : 13, 25, 28, xiv : 1ff., xv : 15, 16, but among the Jews, which he proposed also to do in the time immediately following, according to his agreement then entered into with Paul and Barnabas (Gal. ii : 7, 9). Soon after this we find him at Antioch (Gal. ii : 11ff.). At the time of Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, that is a. 57, he had yet no fixed settlement, but travelled about as a missionary with his wife (1 Cor. ix : 5). In the year 58 he cannot have been in Rome, for then Paul would certainly have named him among the many salutations which he then forwarded there in Rom. xvi. Altogether the Epistle to the Romans knows nothing of the labors of Peter, either then or before, in that great metropolis, but as already remarked supposes rather the contrary. In the spring of a. 61 Paul came himself as a prisoner to Rome; the Acts informs us of his meeting with christians of that place, (xxviii : 15ff.), but say not a syllable of Peter, which on the supposition of his being there would be utterly inexplicable. In the years 61-63 Paul wrote from Rome his last Epistles, in which he introduces by name his companions and helpers, presents salutations from them, and complains finally of his being left alone (Col. iv : 10, 11, Philem. 23, 24, Phil. iv : 21, 22, 2 Tim. iv : 9-22, i : 15-18), but passes over Peter in profound silence, and this surely not out of jealousy or dislike, but because he was not in his neighborhood.

Peter can have come to Rome first therefore only after the second Epistle to Timothy, and not long before the date of his own Epistles, that is in the last half of the year 63 or in the

beginning of the year 64;<sup>7</sup> and so accordingly, as he suffered martyrdom in the persecution under Nero, we can hardly extend his sojourn there above one year.\* Eusebius and Jerome indeed place his death in the year 67; but since they affirm at the same time, along with universal tradition, that he died at the same time with Paul in the persecution under Nero, which according to Tacitus broke out in July a. 64; and since a second persecution under the same emperor cannot be proved, the chronological date thus given is clearly erroneous; and is owing to the fact in part no doubt, that the fathers in this point, instead of following the accurate and full statement of *Tacitus*, made use rather of *Suetonius*, who separates the persecution from its occasion, the burning of the city, and altogether is not chronological in his narration.<sup>9</sup>

That Peter, as long as he was in Rome, stood in conjunction with Paul at the head of the affairs of the church and exercised a leading influence, needs no proof; but that he was *bishop* in the proper sense, and so the *first* bishop of Rome, contradicts the nature of the Apostolic office, which has regard to the church as a whole and not to any single diocese, and is a fiction of the Ebionitic Clementine Homilies, from which, as wrought afterwards into more orthodox form in the Recognitions, it passed over into the Catholic Church. *Clement* himself; the third Roman bishop, knew nothing of it, and from the glowing description he gives of Paul in the 5th chapter of his first epistle

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<sup>7</sup> This is confirmed in substance also by *Lactantius* († 339), who brings Peter to Rome first under the reign of Nero (*De mortibus persec. c. 2*, Cumque jam Nero imperaret, Petrus Romam advenit etc.), and by *Origen* († 254), who brings him there at the close of his life (*in reclusis*, in Euseb. H. E. III, 1.).

<sup>8</sup> As even an unprejudiced Roman Catholic writer grants in an article of the Theol. Quarterly published by Drey, Herbst and Hirscher, Tübingen 1820 p. 567f. *Windischmann* will have it indeed, that Peter resided in Rome during the intervals also of which we have no direct notice in the N. T. as regards the question here in hand, namely in the years 44–49, 52–58, 60–61 and 64–68. But if so, he must have been there in very furtive style, must have kept purposely out of the way of the Epistle to the Romans and of Paul's arrival in the city, and according to Paul's Epistles left no trace of his presence there before the year 63! In zeal for the honor of the Prince of the Apostles must we cry out to such an advocate; *Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis!*

<sup>9</sup> Comp. on this defect in the Eusebian chronology *Wieseler* p. 544ff. The influence of *Suetonius* appears most plainly in *Orosius*, *Histor. VIII, 7*. Only *Sulpitius Severus* *Hist. sac. II, 29*, seems to have used the statement of *Tacitus*. Possibly the condemnatory judgment which the stoical historian pronounces on the christians (*Annal. XV, 44*), was the ground of his being slighted by the church fathers.

to the Corinthians, we can see clearly that he ascribes a greater significance to this Apostle for the Roman church than he does to Peter. *Irenaeus* and *Eusebius* name *Linus* rather as the first Roman bishop, and even *Epiphanius* himself makes a distinction plainly between the apostolical and episcopal offices.<sup>10</sup>

### *The martyrdom of Peter.*

It is the universal voice of antiquity, that Peter was crucified in the persecution under Nero. Consequently, as already remarked, his death cannot fall in the year 67, as even most later historians give it, following *Eusebius* and *Jerome*, but must be placed in the year 64, in which this persecution broke out directly after the firing of the city in July, and in which also an end was put to the earthly labors of Paul, only perhaps somewhat earlier and by the less degrading process of decapitation. As the place of his punishment, according to the testimony of *Caius* already quoted, was pointed out at the end of the second century the Vatican hill beyond the Tiber, where lay the Circus and Nero's Gardens, and where according to *Tacitus* the persecution of the Christians actually took place. There also was built to his memory the church of Peter, as over Paul's grave on the way to Ostia without the city the church of Paul.

The oldest testimony for the crucifixion of Peter we find already in the appendix to John's Gospel c. xxi: 18, 19, where our Lord himself, in the memorable dialogue there recorded, foretells to him that in his old age he would stretch forth his hands, and that another should bind him and lead whither naturally he would not wish. *Tertullian* remarks expressly, that Peter in his passion was made like the Lord.<sup>11</sup> The statement, that he suffered crucifixion with his head downwards toward the earth, meets us first in *Origen*,<sup>12</sup> and this was taken afterwards

<sup>10</sup> See *Schlicermann's* Clementinen (1844) p. 115, and *Gieseler's* K. G. I. 1, p. 103. 281.

<sup>11</sup> De praeser. haeret. c. 36. - - Romam - - ubi Petrus passioni Dominae adaequatur.

<sup>12</sup> In *Euseb. H. E. III, 1*: Πέτρος - - ὅς καὶ ἐν τῷ ἐν τῷ ῥώμῃ γενόμενος ἀνεκρινόμην κατὰ κεφαλὴν, οὗτως αὐτὸς ἀγώνισας παθόν. This is then thus paraphrased in the spirit of monkish piety by *Rufinus*: crucifixus est deorsum capite demerso, quod ipse ita fieri deprecatus est, ne exaequari Domino videretur. In like style *Jerome*, who had a special relish for such traits, De vir. illustr. c. 3: a quo (Nero) et affixus cruci, martyrio coronatus est, capite ad terram verso et in sublime pedibus elevatis; asserens se indignum, qui sic crucifigiretur ut Dominus suus.



as an evidence of his special humility, by which he felt himself unworthy to die in the same manner with Christ. When we read in Tacitus of the unnatural tortures to which the Christians were subjected by Nero, the fact of such a mode of death seems not improbable, although the motive brought in to explain it betrays a later sickly conception of the nature of humility, whereas the Apostles counted it their greatest honor and joy rather to be like their Lord and Master in all particulars. It is related by Ambrose, that Peter shortly before his death, being overpowered by his former love of life, made his escape from prison, but was arrested and confounded in his flight by the appearance of the Saviour bearing his cross, who in reply to the question, "Lord, whither goest thou?" solemnly responded: "I am going to Rome, to be crucified again!" Whereupon Peter hastily turned back and met death with joy. This tradition still lives in the mouth of the people of Rome, and is embodied in a church styled *Domine quo vadis*, in front of the Sebastian gate, on the Appian way. It is one of those significant stories, that rest on no historical fact indeed but still on a right apprehension of the character in question, and to which may be applied the Italian proverb: *se non è vero, è ben trovato*. To shrink from suffering was in truth a characteristic trait of the natural Simon (comp. xvi: 22, 23, the account of his denial of Christ and what Christ says to him John xxi: 18). But at so great an age he had no doubt long surmounted this feeling, and welcomed the hour, when he was counted worthy to seal his love to the Saviour with his blood and permitted to put off his earthly tabernacle (2 Peter i: 14), for the purpose of entering on "the inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away" (1 Peter i: 4), which he knew to be reserved for him in heaven.

Translated by J. W. N.

## THE ANGLICAN CRISIS.

THE man who takes no lively interest in the present ecclesiastical troubles of England, under the notion possibly that they belong only to a standpoint of prejudice and superstition which he and the American world generally have happily left forever behind, has good reason to suspect some fatal flaw in the constitution of his own piety. Never since the age of the Reformation, has the progress of the Church presented practical questions of more solemn moment, or issues of more thrilling significance for the future. The course of events there now may be regarded as eminently *historical*, in the true and proper sense of this term; which is not reached by any means with the notion merely of passing years and their budget of facts, but implies the idea of actual movement in the world's inward life, the development of tendencies and principles into new results of general and lasting force for the nation and the race. Such palpably is the nature of the great church agitation, which has been for some time shaking England to its centre, and the end of which no one is able yet to calculate or foresee. It is no superficial or merely transient commotion. It is no play of simply pragmatical contrivance and policy, in the hands of men intent on altogether other ends; however ready the art of courts and political parties may show itself, as in all similar cases, to turn the movement into its own service. Under all such false purposes and aims, the ruling power of the agitation is undoubtedly a true interest of humanity, the working of religion, the most fundamental of all forces in history, in a form which it is quite possible that kings and parliaments may find as much beyond their control at last as the whirlwind itself.

Serious men feel this in England; and they are coming to feel it, more and more, also in other countries. Nor is this feeling confined by any means to those who are members of the Episcopal Church. It extends to all Protestant communions, just in proportion to their intelligence and their knowledge of what is going forward in the world. This itself may be taken as a criterion of the real general historical significance of the problem, which is here in the course of practical solution. It is only what is thus universally significant in its own nature, that has power to engage in this way general attention and concern; and then it is not so much through any personal reflection that this takes place, as in obedience rather to a sort of instinctive consciousness, by which men feel themselves sympathetically

borne along with the authority of such a movement, whether it suit their judgment and taste otherwise to make much account of it or not. It is curious to observe, how this law works in the case now under consideration. With all their professed indifference or hostility to the Establishment, Dissenters of every hue find themselves forced to mix themselves up to a certain extent with its controversies and quarrels, though hardly able to tell in many cases *where* exactly it becomes them to take their position. The Presbyterianism of Scotland too is not able to sit still; and even the Puritanism of this country, while it affects to despise the whole doctrine of the Sacraments and of the Church as it is here in controversy, sees itself constrained notwithstanding to acknowledge indirectly the deep solemnity of the struggle, as one in which some interest of its own is felt to be ultimately at stake. All this goes to show, we say, the profound meaning and far reaching importance of what is taking place. It is indeed a great crisis in the history of Protestantism, not for England only but for all countries; and *not* to see and feel the solemnity of it in this view, as we have said before, is to betray by the very fact a sad want of earnestness in religion altogether. Only the ignorant or frivolous can be indifferent to the progress of so great a question.

The critical character of the movement is shown, not only by the general feeling of anxious awe now mentioned with which it is fixing upon itself more and more the gaze of the world, but by the central relation also in which it stands plainly to the bearings of previous history. It is no sudden excitement, that comes no one can tell whence and looks no one can tell whither. In all parts of the world, Protestantism has been for some time past in a course of inward preparation, either theoretically or practically, for just such a powerful reaction in favor of the old idea of the Church, with its corresponding principles and doctrines. There must have been in this way a mighty predisposition in the English mind towards Catholicism, or at least a mighty dissatisfaction inwardly with Puritanism, to account at all for the rapid growth of the Tractarian system, since its first appearance fifteen years ago in Oxford. It is easy enough moreover to point out powerful tendencies, which have been working either negatively or positively in other lands also, in the same general direction. The time has not yet fully come indeed, to estimate these in their whole strength. But it is plain enough, for all thinking men, that the problem of the Church Question, as it enters into the controversy between Catholics and Protestants, has been for some time past challenging reconsideration

and demanding new settlement ; and that this call is powerfully enforced from all sides, by what we may style the whole experience of the age, in a political and secular as well as ecclesiastical view. The English movement falls in with this wide spread and manifestly providential tendency, as it is clearly also the fruit of it and one of its most startling and awakening results. This of course shows again its vast historical significance and force. It lies at the very heart undoubtedly of the general life of the age ; and it is all in order accordingly, that the earnest and thoughtful, who stand in the nearest sympathy always with this life, should regard what is passing with more than usual interest and concern.

Taking the controversy in the broad view now noticed, there is no reason whatever for restraining this interest to the bounds of the Episcopal Church. The question in agitation is something far deeper at last, than the proper view to be taken of the Protestantism of this particular body, or of its rights and claims over against the Church of Rome. It looks directly to the whole constitution of Protestantism, and grapples at once with the deepest and most universal issue that holds between it and Romanism. Episcopacy here becomes a mere circumstance ; it may be in itself an element of some considerable account for the final settlement of the subject in hand, but it is still a secondary and subordinate particular only, and by no means the central or main thing, the very root and marrow, as some affect to think, of the whole question that is to be solved. To make it so, either on one side or the other, is sheer pedantry of the poorest and most pitiful kind. The question which lies at the heart of this movement, and communicates to it all its depth and power, is of no such shallow range. It goes far below this, to the very foundations of the whole cause of the Reformation. It is not necessary that one should be an Episcopalian, to feel himself brought into direct contact with its vastly solemn scope. He may feel this also, and ought to feel it, as a Presbyterian, as a Methodist, and even as a Congregational Puritan. For under every such character, he is still bound to take a lively interest in all that concerns the general constitution of that common Protestantism, out of which these unfortunate distinctions spring. And this interest is due to the case before us, independently altogether of the view that may be taken of the main question in debate. Let it even be supposed, that the whole drift and aim of the Catholic tendency is false, and that the true perfection of Protestantism is to be sought only in its being stripped of the last shred of churchly feeling, (after the taste of the Baptists,)

then will there be only the more reason of course to watch anxiously the progress of the present movement, and to look forward earnestly to the day when this desirable consummation shall be reached. The sacramental and the unsacramental alike have a deep interest at stake, in the present transitional crisis of the Anglican Church; and just in proportion to their earnestness, may they be expected accordingly to turn towards it their most solemn regards.

Of the last class we know indeed that there are many, who make it a point to treat the whole subject with an air of easy superiority and disdain; as though there were no room in truth for any rational controversy in the case, and so of course no ground for apprehension with regard to its ultimate issues, and no occasion therefore for any special interest in its progress. It is wonderful really how easily and how soon this unchurchly and unsacramental school in general are able to make a full end of this deepest problem of the age, and to gain a height of serene conviction in relation to it, that sets them quite beyond the reach of all the doubts and difficulties that seem to surround it for minds of another cast and make. To *them* the whole church question, as it now disturbs the peace of England, is nonsense and folly; they see to the bottom of it at once, and only wonder that men of education and sense in the English Church should find the least trouble in bringing it to its proper solution. Romanism is a tissue of abominations and absurdities from beginning to end; Puseyism is made up of silly puerilities, that cannot bear the light of common sense for a single moment; and it only shows the misery of Episcopacy and the English Establishment, that it should have given birth to so sickly a spawn at this late day, or that it should now find it so hard to expel the thing from its bosom. The proper cure for all such mummery is to give up the church mania altogether, to discard the whole idea of sacramental grace, to fall back on the Bible and private judgment as the true and only safe rule of Protestantism, and to make Christianity thus a matter of reason and common sense. This too is clearly the order and course of the age; all is tending, by political and ecclesiastical revolution as well as by the onward march of science, towards this glorious result of independence and freedom; and it may well be expected therefore, that all these church crotchets will soon follow the other rubbish of the Middle Ages into the darkness of perpetual oblivion and night.

But it is just one of the great uses of instruction to be drawn from this movement, that it is eminently suited to convict all

such flippant thinking of falsehood, and to expose it for the seriously thoughtful in its true nakedness and poverty. The entire history of Christianity indeed, for one who is able to study it, is replete with instruction in the same form; it is impossible to have any tolerable familiarity with it, and not be filled with a sort of moral nausea towards all such crude and empty declamation, as being a libel on its whole divine significance from the start. But it is well to have the lesson brought home, as it is here, to the very door of our own life and day. And no one will pretend, that it is not so here under a form that carries with it extraordinary weight. So much is this the case, that even the class of whom we now speak, with all their self-complacent flippancy, find themselves forced, as we have already seen, to do some homage instinctively to the inherent solemnity of the crisis which is passing. With all their tone of contempt for it, they have no power to avert from it absolutely their eyes, or to speak of it with calm indifference; which they should be able to do certainly, if it were in its own nature really so puerile and weak as they pretend. And who may not see, that the instinctive feeling here is more to be trusted, than the empty judgment to which it gives the lie. If ever a movement deserved to be honored, for its religious earnestness and for the weight of intellectual and moral capital embarked in it, such title to respect may fairly be challenged by this late revival of the catholic tendency in the English Church. The movement is of far too high and ominous a character, has enlisted in its service far too great an amount of powerful intellect and learning and study, and has gone forward with far too much prayer, and fasting and inward spiritual conflict, and has taken hold far too deeply of the foundations of the best religious life of the nation, and has led and is leading still to far too many and too painful sacrifices, like the dividing of soul and spirit or of the joints and marrow—to be resolved with any sort of rationality whatever into views and motives, so poor as those which are called in to account for it by the self-sufficient class of whom we now speak. To charge such a movement with puerility, to set it down as destitute of all reason and in full contradiction to the clear sense of religion, as a mere rhapsody of folly without occasion or meaning in the proper history of the Church, is but to make ourselves puerile and silly in the highest degree. Plainly it is the part of true wisdom, rather to pause before such an imposing fact with a certain measure of reverence, whether our sympathies fall in with it or not, to study it carefully in all its proportions, and thus to turn it to some purpose of instruction and profit that may be

helpful in the end to others as well as to ourselves. There is no excuse for treating such a fact with mere ribaldry and scorn. We are bound in all right reason, as well as in all good conscience, to take it for granted that it is not without meaning, whether we have power to understand the sense of it or not. It is high time, we think, in view of what has taken place already in the history of this Anglican movement, and of what is now taking place—not to speak of events that are as yet only casting their shadows before them—that our popular declaimers on the subject, whether of the rostrum or the press, should pull in their zeal a little, and learn to proceed somewhat more moderately in their philippics and squibs. They are, in the usual style, quite too wholesale and sweeping. All excess at last cuts the sinews of its own strength; an argument which proves too much destroys itself; and so there is some reason to apprehend, that this anti-catholic and anti-sacramental ammunition may in the end lose its effect altogether, by being simply pushed too far and so made vile and cheap. The method is indeed short and easy, and answers an admirable purpose especially for our May anniversaries, where many of the orators, as we all know, would be sadly at a loss to get along at all, without the opportunity of such wholesale never-come-amiss vituperation of Romanism and Puseyism, with all that belongs to the sacramental system. But for all this, it is high time, we say again, that men who lay claim to so large a portion of all the knowledge and piety that are going, should begin to be a little more reserved at least in the practice of such polemics, as being more and more likely to make an impression on thinking people the very opposite of that which they themselves seek and wish.

We do not mean of course, that the personal credit of the party embarked in the Tractarian cause, whether still in the Church of England or gone over to Rome, is to be taken as an argument for the truth of the cause itself; or that this is to be made right and good, by any consideration simply of the learning and piety, the labors and sacrifices, which it has had power thus far to engage in its service. There are learning and piety also on the other side; and the question is not to be settled at once by any proof of this sort in either direction. All we mean is, that a cause which is thus circumstanced is no fit object of wholesale contempt. It has a right to be looked upon with respect, and to challenge sober and serious examination. More than this, it must include in its constitution some real meaning and reason, well entitled to consideration, which it is perfectly certain that those have never yet come to see or understand, who



affect to dispose of its pretensions in any such summary and sweeping style.

The catholic and sacramental tendency in religion is something too great, to be set aside lawfully by a flippant dash of the tongue or pen, or by a mere magisterial wave of the hand. All superficial criticism here is egregiously out of place. Never was there a case, in which it could be less reasonable and becoming to sit at the feet of fools for instruction; and it is truly humiliating to see, how readily this is done by a large part of the nominally Protestant world, to whom every strolling mountebank is welcome that comes among them as a lecturer on Romanism; as though the deepest and most sacred themes of religion, and questions that have carried with them the earnestness of death itself for the most earnest and profound minds age after age, might be satisfactorily settled in five minutes' time with a flourish of idle declamation, by men whose want of serious thought is as it were visibly stamped on their whole face. Such championship of Protestantism is of course disgraceful, and tends directly to kill its own cause; on which account we are not much surprised to learn, that a somewhat notorious renegade brawler of this sort, who is now scouring the country, has come to be regarded by some with suspicion as being possibly himself still only a cunning Jesuit in disguise. But the championship may be of a much more respectable order than this, and yet fall fairly notwithstanding under the same general charge of frivolous superficiality. It may proceed, not from fools and blackguards but from men of respectable education and apparently very serious piety, and yet be of such form and spirit throughout as to show manifestly, that it is dealing with a subject which it has never taken any serious pains to understand, and the merits of which therefore it has no power either to fathom or explain. So it must ever be, where it is assumed from the outset that the subject carries in it no real difficulty, that two or three obvious common sense maxims are sufficient to settle it immediately and entirely one way, and that it is only a sort of palpable hallucination to think seriously for a moment of settling it in any other way.

In the case before us, all such sweeping criticism, we repeat, is in danger more and more of fairly capsizing by its own spread of sail. Of this some seem to be growing at least partially aware, and we notice accordingly in the late *Tabernacle oratory*, as reported in the newspapers, an occasional lowering of the usual high tone in regard to the intrinsic folly and wickedness of the whole Catholic system. A few of the best speakers have

condescended to acknowledge, that this system is not so utterly destitute of all sense and piety as is often imagined, that the main power of it after all lies in the appeal it makes to some of the higher principles of our nature, and that it may be found in this way to carry in it a perilous charm, a true siren's voice, even for religiously earnest and learned men, nay, for this class perhaps, in certain states of thought, beyond all sorts of people besides. "The sacramental system," in the language of one of these speakers, "is susceptible of such an expression, that its repulsiveness may be concealed, and it may be rendered attractive and full of spiritual meaning; and this was the reason why it attracted many of the learned and refined. It was impossible to read the Oxford tracts, or to converse with some of those who had gone from among us, and not feel that Popery is a system that may be rendered attractive to certain minds. But, nevertheless, it is a false system; and it is in this *plausible* aspect that it needs to be met, as a false theory." But even this sort of concession, we feel bound to say, gentlemanly as it is in comparison with the tone too often adopted by others, falls altogether short of the respect that is justly due to the subject, and that *must* be felt as well as professed towards it, before it can be approached in any case with truly successful controversy and debate.

The air of *condescension* here is quite too palpable, implying as it does the sense of most complete personal superiority to the entire issue in hand, to allow the supposition that there has been any real mastery after all of its proper difficulties and merits. No man can be justified in the use of this tone in such a case, we say it respectfully but still with the most firm decision, who has not been led in the first place through much profound thought and earnest prayer to the platform on which he is brought finally to stand; and then the fruit of his experience will have been such, beyond all doubt, that it will be morally impossible for him not to allow a great deal more still in favor of the system, which he ventures thus intelligently and not blindly to condemn. It is not enough, to say that the sacramental system is very childish, and contrary to the Bible, and at war with the whole idea of evangelical religion; but that we may easily see still how it can have charms for persons of a sentimental and poetical turn of mind; and so are bound to acknowledge the learning and religious sincerity of many who are now yielding themselves to its power, while we pity and deplore their blindness as contrasted with our own light. The apology itself, in any such form, is intolerably superficial and slim. It may go down, as a nice

morsel of philosophical wisdom, with some dreamy audience of the Broadway Tabernacle, but it can never bring any true and solid satisfaction to wakefully inquiring souls that hunger after truth. All such see at once, that it needs something more than sentimentalism to explain a movement so vast and deep. The very fact that the system in question has carried in it such power, through all past times, to lead captive the minds of the cultivated and learned, as well as of the rude multitude, and that it is doing this now in so earnest a way, should be taken as itself solemn proof that it is not without some sort of cause and reason, in the religious wants of men and the revelation of grace with which they are met in Christianity. Why should the system be so hard to destroy, and whence should it have come to so powerful a revival in the very bosom of Protestantism itself, and by what means shall we account for its energy and zeal, if it be in itself after all so void of reason, and so diametrically opposed to every right conception of religion, as is taken for granted even by the more liberal representation of which we now speak. No such system could ever so prevail, if it were altogether without reason. No such system could so turn the heads of the best scholars in the English Church, if it were made up of mere puerilities and dreams. No such system could produce so much uncommonly earnest fruit, in the way of fasting and prayer and sacrifice, if it were a simple trick of Satan got up to put down Christ. Every assumption of this sort is violent, outrages reason, and flies in the face of clear facts; and no opposition which is made to the system on any such ground, however respectable it may be in other respects, will be found of any true weight in the end. We have a right to say to such opposition always: "You have never yet so studied this system, as to be justified in using towards it the tone of superiority with which you affect to speak: It may be open to censure in the form here noticed, and it is in truth of the utmost account, in such case, that its faults and defects should be brought fully and clearly into view: But *you* evidently are not yet prepared for any such work: Your supposed superiority to the party on whom you pretend to sit in judgment, is imaginary only and in no sense real: You must think more a great deal, pray more, wrestle more, before you can deserve to be regarded as in any state answerable at all in these respects to the moral weight of the movement on the other side: That all is so clear and easy to your view, only shows how dark in fact your view still is: The first and most necessary condition for fighting Puseyism and Popery to purpose, let it be well understood and borne in mind,

the most indispensable *sine qua non* of all right to be heard in the controversy at all, is power to perceive and acknowledge the vast body of awfully solemn and most deeply interesting and vital truth, which enters into these systems, and clothes them with their strange and mysterious authority for so many earnest minds."

What makes this Anglican crisis particularly solemn for serious thinkers, is the force it has to bring out sensibly the difficulties and contradictions that belong to the present state of the Church on different sides. In this respect, it may be taken as of a truly diacritical nature; for it goes to probe and expose the doubtful character at least of much, which was before rested in with a sort of passive acquiescence as good and sufficient, simply because it was put to no practical inquest and trial. It sometimes happens that what has seemed to work well enough for ages in this way, is at last suddenly found wanting, to the view of all who do not choose wilfully to shut their own eyes, by some new experiment it may be of a very few years; a particular turn or juncture in history, that serves of itself all at once to bring out, with glaring revelation, huge flaws and defects of which the world generally seemed to have no sense whatever before. Such a juncture, to our view, in the progress of modern church history, is the movement now under consideration. It is in this light especially, that we look upon it as eminently entitled to attention, and as more than usually pregnant with instruction.

Who that thinks seriously, for instance, can fail to be struck with the fearfully ominous posture, into which the whole open and professed no-church interest is thrown by the progress of this controversy. By such interest we do not mean of course those who repudiate the name and notion of a church out and out, but that large class of Protestants rather which has come to look upon the Church as only a notion or a name, disclaiming all faith in its proper supernatural character as we find this asserted in the Apostles' Creed. The opposition which holds between this sort of religion, whether on the outside of the Episcopal church or in the bosom of it, and the old catholic faith, has been all along felt; but there has been room generally for a certain amount of vague uncertainty and disguise in the case, which has kept the full sense of the issue always more or less out of sight. The no-church interest contrived too commonly not to come to any clear understanding with its own theory, finding it more convenient to take the general orthodoxy of it for granted, and to assail negatively the views of the other side at given points as unevangelical and absurd. But one grand effect now

of the crisis which is going forward in England, is to put a full end to all such dubious and deceitful twilight, and to drag this question so into the blaze of day, that all men may see and know where they stand with regard to it, and judge of themselves and of one another accordingly. The main significance of the crisis lies just here, that it goes so thoroughly to the heart and core of the church question, and shuts men up to the necessity of answering it in a direct way, if they answer it at all, with full view of what their answer means.

The force of the question in the end is nothing less than this: Whether the original catholic doctrine concerning the Church, as it stood in universal authority through all ages before the Reformation, is to be received and held still as a necessary part of the christian faith, or deliberately rejected and refused as an error dangerous to men's souls and at war with the Bible? No one will pretend to say surely, that this is not a great question, and worthy of being met with a feeling of sacred awe. It is so, whatever view we take of the proper answer; for let it be considered never so plain and certain, that the rejection of the old doctrine is required by common sense, and that to uphold it is the perfection of folly and superstition, it is still something exceedingly solemn to come in this way to full rupture with a creed, which has been of such wide dominion and of such ancient date, and that must be acknowledged by all too to have been crowned in times past with extraordinary power and fruit. To break faith and communion in this way, not only with such men as Anselm, Bernard, and others of like spirit in the Middle Ages, but with the fathers also of the fifth and fourth centuries, the Gregories, Basils, Augustines and Chrysostoms, who shine as stars of the first magnitude in that older period of the Church, and still more with the entire noble army of martyrs and confessors in primitive times, clear back as it would seem to the very age at least next following that of the Apostles; to break faith and communion, we say, with all this vast and glorious "cloud of witnesses," not on a merely circumstantial point but on a question reaching to the inmost life of christianity itself, is beyond contradiction a thought of such momentous gravity as might well be expected to fill even the most confident with some measure of concern.

Here comes into view the proper significance of the controversy with regard to Baptismal Grace. The idea that the holy sacraments are divine acts, that they carry in them a mystical force for their own ends, that they are the media of operations working towards salvation which have their efficacy and value,

not from the mind of the worshipper, but from the power of the transaction or thing done itself, reaches back plainly to the earliest times of the Church, and has been counted a necessary part of the christian faith by the great body of those who have professed it through all ages. Baptism has been held thus to be for the remission of sins, and to carry with it in some way an actual making over to the subject, on the part of God or Christ, of the grace it signifies and represents. In this view, we find it identified very directly from the first with the idea of regeneration itself. So through the whole period before the Reformation. The mystical sense of the sacrament, and its real relation to the new birth, are everywhere acknowledged, and appear intertwined with the universal system both of doctrine and worship. The use of infant baptism in particular turns altogether on the assumption of such an objective force in the ordinance, and must be surely undermined indeed, sooner or later, wherever this assumption is renounced. Protestantism in the sixteenth century had no thought of breaking here with the faith of previous ages; and the Baptists of that time were regarded accordingly with little less horror than the Socinians themselves. Luther insisted on baptismal regeneration in the strongest terms. Calvin is more guarded, but very firm also in maintaining the mystical supernatural power of the sacrament, as parallel in full with the virtue he supposed to go along with the holy eucharist. The baptism of infants was continued in the Protestant Church on this ground alone, and has been spoken of from the first as in their case emphatically the sacrament of regeneration. So we have it broadly and plainly represented in the English Liturgy. With Puritanism however, the tendency has been all along to make but little of sacramental grace, and to turn the laver of regeneration in particular into a mere bold figure; and we find it now taking its stand openly and decidedly against the ancient church spirit, in its late Anglican revival, just on the platform of this question, as one of central and main account for the whole controversy to which it belongs. The question in truth is thus central in its nature. It involves at bottom the whole force of the alternative, *Church or No-church*, in the form already presented, as a solemn choice in fact between owning or disowning the creed of all Christendom in former times. And the alternative is brought home in so practical a way, that it is no longer easy to evade the full sense and point of the issue, which is comprehended in it under this broad view. This it is that makes the "Gorham case" of such high moment and far reaching significance at the present time, far beyond what many

see or imagine, not only for the Church of England but for the cause of Protestantism in general.

For let it be well observed, that the controversy now at last regards not simply the use of the word *regeneration*, nor some one sense in which it may be taken on either side, nor the doctrine merely of the English Service Book in any sense, but the whole idea of *baptismal grace*, and along with this the whole conception of sacramental grace in any form, as an objective mystical and supernatural virtue going along with the holy sacraments, in distinction from all states and acts accompanying the use of them in the minds of men. We have no right to make this a question for Episcopalians only or for the English Establishment; as though it were a contest properly only between a high party and a low one in that semi-catholic communion, touching the construction of a few unfortunate clauses in their Liturgy; while other denominations may be considered as out of its range altogether. We ought to see and feel, that it is a question, not for Episcopalians as such only, but for all Protestants.

It comes just to this now more and more plainly, whether the old notion of baptismal grace, as it reigned through all ages before the Reformation, is to be still retained in any sense, or fairly expelled from the bosom of Protestantism as a foreign heterogeneous element which had no business to be there in the beginning, and that never can be brought to amalgamate with it in an inward and true way. The Puritan party in the English Establishment, and still more readily of course the Puritan and Baptist tendencies on the outside of it, are in the way of taking openly and with full consciousness more and more the broad ground, that the doctrine of the Prayer-Book on this subject is a pure superstition, as bad as the old dream of transubstantiation itself, and that the farther the Protestant world can get away from it the better. It was all a pernicious mistake, we are told, that the old church made so much of the supposed mystical force of the institution; there is no particular mystery in it; baptism is a sign simply of spiritual benefits to be received in truth in quite another way; and to attach to it any higher significance, to make it in any view a vehicle of grace, is to endanger seriously the interests of *evangelical* religion. It is to fall into the vortex of the sacramental system, against which the entire evangelical host of God's elect—whether known otherwise as Congregationalist, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Quaker, or what not besides—is bound to exercise watch and wage war forever, as



part and parcel of the policy of Antichrist, to deceive the nations and destroy the Church.

Such is the issue here joined, between the churchly and unchurchly tendencies which are now brought to wrestle, as it were in final deadly conflict, for the mastery of Protestantism, in this great English movement. Need we say, that so apprehended the struggle is one of intense interest and solemn as the grave? We see not how it can well stop, till the question is practically settled, not whether, regeneration in some particular sense of this term is always accomplished by baptism, but whether baptism is to remain a sacrament at all for Protestantism, in the old universal church sense. Sacrament or no-sacrament, is in truth the question to be decided; and decided it will be, with consequences of unutterable moment, accordingly as the Protestant world is brought to rest now prevailing in one or the other side of this ominous controversy. We wonder how any person of serious and intelligent mind can fail to regard the controversy, in such view, with profound solemnity and concern. For let it be taken as indeed destined to settle finally the question now presented, the question namely whether Protestantism is a "sacramental system" at all, or carries in it any acknowledgment whatever of sacramental grace, as this idea runs through the whole previous faith of the Church back to the days of Ignatius, Polycarp, and the Apostles, and who may not see that it is in fact a crisis for the whole Protestant cause, (and not for Episcopacy only,) equal to any perhaps through which it has been called to pass since its origin in the sixteenth century. In the naked and broad form in which it has come up for practical decision in the English Church, we are not surprised at all that so many of the best men in that communion have been led to look upon it as the very Thermopylae of the whole church controversy, a question of life and death in truth for English Protestantism. It is only surprising that Evangelical Dissenters so generally, as well as Low Church Episcopalians, should have so little power apparently to look at the crisis in the same way. That the Baptists should desire to see the last trace of the old sacramental system obliterated from Protestant Christianity, is all in order; but how can Lutherans and the Reformed, Methodists, Presbyterians, or even Congregationalists of the old stamp, fall in with their perfectly unchurchly humor, and not be struck with some feeling of anxiety and dread at the thought of making Protestantism by its own voice and vote constitutionally baptismal and unsacramental, in any such open revolutionary style? Can they look the present issue solemnly and steadily in the

face, and say : " Away with this whole doctrine of the mystical objective force of baptism ; we hold it for no part of pure Protestantism ; we deliberately renounce here all fellowship with the Holy Catholic Church of other ages, and with the clear sense of the ancient creeds, and count it a gain for evangelical religion to get clear also of all such obsolete mystification as we find on this subject even in Luther, Calvin, and the English Prayer-Book." Is *this*, we say, what such warfare against the sacramental system means ? Is it at last in league with the Baptists and Quakers out and out, for the overthrow of the sacraments altogether ?

So much for the no-church, no-sacrament party of the day, whether in the English Establishment or on the outside of it, whether in Great Britain we may add or in this country. It is exposed here to a sifting probation, which is well adapted to bring out the true nature of its principles, and to make them for considerate men an object of wholesome apprehension and dread. But the crisis carries with it a sifting efficacy also in other directions.

It bears with trying severity on the pretensions of Episcopacy. This system, as it prevails in England and this country, admits either too little or too much for the stability of its own claims.

Take the Low Church ground in its communion, and it sinks at once plainly to the order of the sects around it, which have by open profession discarded the proper church theory altogether ; it is one simply among the various denominations of the christian world, arguing from scripture and reason as it best can for its own peculiarities, but not venturing to make them in any way of the very essence of faith. In this view, Episcopacy becomes at best a simply outward institute, a matter purely of authority and so in truth a matter of mere ceremonial and form ; of the same order precisely with the law and letter of other distinctions, on the strength of which the Baptists, the Scotch Seceders, and such like bodies, are accustomed to make a parade in true Jewish style of their great regard for God's will. The Baptist pleases himself with the notion of his strict conformity to the "*law* of baptism," without note or comment, in the rejection of its use for infants, involving the repudiation of the whole idea of sacramental grace ; while the Episcopalian pleases himself, in exactly the same way, with the notion of following the primitive and apostolical law of church government and worship, by acknowledging three orders in the ministry and the necessity of a public liturgy. This feeling indeed may go so far, that he shall appear to be anything but a low churchman in the assertion

of it; for as the distinction runs most commonly perhaps between high and low here, it regards rather the stress which is laid on this mechanical notion of Episcopacy, than the truth of the notion itself. The low churchman, in this view, rests his cause more on the ground of expediency and rational preference; whereas the so called high churchman affects to build upon the outward precept as the very rock, beyond which no church whatever can be supposed to exist. In this sense, the rigid Baptist is also a high churchman, who counts all baptism a nullity that is not suited to his own scheme; and so too is the stiff Seceder, who refuses to hold communion with such as stick not exclusively to the use of David's psalms. In truth however Episcopacy of this sort is low enough, and the difference between it and that which more generally bears that name, is more circumstantial than real. Nay, it is in some respects more unchurchly even than the other order of thinking, just because it goes more decidedly to resolve the idea of the church into the notion of an external law, and so into mere Jewish mechanism and form. The true high church theory requires something far beyond this, and is virtually surrendered in fact where it is made to rest on any such false and insufficient foundation.

The progress of the present Anglican agitation, extending as it must of necessity do more and more also to this country, is serving powerfully to illustrate and confirm what is now said. The false and suicidal position of that large class of Episcopalians, whose church principles are confessedly only Evangelical Puritanism under the drapery of Episcopal forms, is becoming fast apparent to all men. Their peculiarity of faith and worship is vastly too small, their Protestant maxim much too large and wide, to justify the ground they take over against the other divisions of God's sacramental host, confessedly as evangelical as themselves. Nor is it any excuse, that all this is a matter of church order for their body, and not directly of their own choice and will. We all know the original meaning of this order; it turns on the old doctrine of no salvation out of the church, and assumes that the measure of the church is its own communion. What must we think then of those who reject every such thought, and yet show themselves as exclusive as though it were still the full object of their faith? It would be far more honest and manly, we think, if the school here noticed, both in England and in this country, would at once forsake Anglicanism as it now stands, and either pass over into the bosom of other denominations, or if more to their taste form a new Episcopal sect in open and free fellowship, (like a part of the Baptists,) with other

sections of orthodox Protestantism. How can they reconcile it with a good conscience, to postpone such an interest as this, with all that is staked upon in their own view for the cause just now of evangelical Protestantism, to the consideration of keeping up what they themselves regard as no better than a shadow and a lie—the Episcopal system claiming the prerogatives of a church, to which they allow it no title in fact! If this bold Puritanic view be correct, the Episcopal system, with its manifold reminiscences and echoes of the old church life, must be regarded as a perfect wilderness of contradictions, from which the party in question, one might suppose, would count it both a privilege and a duty to clear themselves as quickly as possible, for the sake of a purer and better faith. If Protestantism mean what *they* take it to mean over against Rome, they put the whole cause into peril by pretending to stand up as they do for *Episcopalian* Protestantism, as being of any real account for the general interest. Their principles should carry them farther. Admit the force of their logic *quoad hoc*, and no one can see why it should not be of force very far beyond. It is childishly wilful, to stop where they insist on stopping, and then pretend to play off the exclusiveness of Rome itself towards all who exceed such arbitrary bounds. If we are to have a *Thus far but no farther* in any case, let us be saved from it at least, in all conscience, under every such purely capricious form! Romanism is more reasonable a great deal than Episcopalianism of this stamp, which first sinks its own authority to the same level with that of all surrounding sects, and then breaks fellowship with every sect besides to uphold it, as the imaginary palladium of the Protestant Reformation.

But what shall we say now of that other form of low Episcopacy, which calls itself *high* only because it is more exclusive in theory as well as practice, and lays greater stress on the legal obligation of its system, while the whole is taken still in the light of a merely mechanical appointment or law? We see not truly, how Episcopalianism in such shape deserves to be considered a whit less pedantic, to say the least, than the exclusiveness of the Baptists or Seceders under a like outwardly legal form. In both cases alike, the Divine element in religion is regarded as holding on the outside of it, in the way of precept, rather than in the very bosom of the system itself; the letter is made to go before the life, to underlie it as first in order and importance, instead of being joined with it in concrete union, and so deriving from it continually all its force. Thus the Baptist pretends to be scrupulously exact in obeying the law of baptism, according to his

own view of the particularities belonging to the rite in the time of the New Testament ; the value of it in his eyes, its true use and necessity, is to be sought only in the notion of its being commanded and enjoined by God ; and so he makes a religious merit of following the injunction, as he supposes, to the letter, unchurching practically all others—on the principle that the essence of religion is implicit submission to God's authority as made known by the Bible, and that it is rationalistic to vary from this a jot or tittle in any way. In truth however, the rationalism lies wholly on his own side ; for the factors of his religion in such form are, not the word as life and spirit, and faith yielding to its plastic force, but the dead letter of the Bible merely and his natural intelligence making out of it what sense it best can. So with the greatest scrupulosity for the form and shell of the sacraments, the true heart and inward substance of them are discarded as a miserable superstition ; the circumstantialia of baptism are made to be everything and its proper essential mystery nothing ; the entire conception of the Church, as anything more than a natural human society, falls to the ground ; and the glorification of God's authority in the Bible, (just because it is thus turned into a dead rule for the natural intellect of man to work by,) becomes in the end a horribly grinning satire upon itself, by resolving faith into common sense and subordinating the whole interest of religion to private judgment and private will. It is not by accident, in this view, that the Baptist spirit, loud as it is at the outset in its profession of being more bound than others by the "law and testimony" of revelation, has ever shown itself prone to make common cause in the end with all sorts of rationalistic radicalism in its open assault on the mysteries of Christianity ; as it is not by accident either, on the other hand, that this radical humor, when it affects as it often does to be on the side of Christ, falls in with the Baptist tendency, in thought and tone, more immediately and readily than with any other sort of open infidelity—having, with all its veneration for the Bible, the same dislike precisely of the Church, and the same horror of everything like sacramental grace. Such, we say, is the fallacy here of resting the idea of religion on the supposed word of God, taken in the light of a merely outward or legal institute. And now we ask, what better is it than this to make Episcopacy, with its outward succession from the time of the Apostles, in and of itself the article of a standing or falling church—on the principle simply, that Christ and his Apostles are supposed to have prescribed this form, and that we have no right therefore to vary from what must be regarded thus as a

strictly Divine rule? It is possible to take very high ground with this view, to be very aristocratic and very exclusive; but the view itself is low, and proceeds on the want of faith in the proper supernatural character of the Church rather than on the presence of such faith; on which account, the farther it is pushed it only becomes the more plainly empty and pedantic. Being of this character, it is found to thrive best, like all pedantries, in periods of mechanical humdrum and sham; while it is sure to be exposed in its true vanity, when the religious life is called to pass through a great general crisis, as at the present time. The more the church question is agitated in an earnest and serious way, and the more men's minds are fixed on its real meaning, the more evident must it become always that no such mechanical view of it as this can ever solve its difficulties or satisfy its requisitions. And such precisely is the way in which the profound Catholic movement now going forward in England, is making itself felt on the pretensions of Episcopacy in this simply outward style all the world over. It is showing them to be hollow and vain, no better in truth than an idle sham. It is causing the earnest minded, both in that communion and out of it, to see and feel, that either the church rights and prerogatives of which it makes a parade are nothing and form no special property whatever in its case, or that they must have far deeper and more solid ground on which to rest than the order of bishops or the use of a liturgy, regarded as a simply outward appointment. No *jure divino* constitution, in any such style as this, can uphold in a real way for faith the mystery of the one, holy, catholic and apostolical Church. The premises are either too narrow for the conclusion, or else a great deal too wide.

Faith in the Church, in the old ecclesiastical sense, is not a stiff persuasion merely that certain arrangements are of divine appointment, and a disposition to stickle for them accordingly as the lines and stakes that go to fix the conception; it is the apprehension rather of the Church as a living supernatural fact, back of all such arrangements, having its ground and force in the mystery of the Incarnation, according to the order of the ancient creed, and communicating to the marks and signs by which it is made visible every particle of virtue that is in them for any such end. This idea goes vastly beyond the notion of Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, or any other supposed divine right ecclesiastical polity of this sort; it looks directly to the original promise, *Lo I am with you always to the end of the world*; and lays hold first and foremost of the mystical being of the Church, as no mechanism of dead statutes, but the actual presence of an ever

living revelation of grace, (no less divine than the Bible itself,) a higher order of history, a strictly heavenly constitution on earth, (Christ's *body*, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all,) in virtue of which only, but in virtue of which at the same time surely, all organs and functions belonging to it have also a super-human and heavenly force. This does not imply that such organs and functions may be indifferently in any form, or in no form whatever, (a theory of *invisibleness* that turns the concrete mystery into a pure abstraction,) but it does mean certainly that the organs and functions make not of themselves the being of the body; they are parts only in any case, which owe their whole vitality and vigor to the general system in which they are comprehended, and away from this are of no worth whatever. If episcopacy and a liturgy be found to grow forth conclusively from the nature of the Church, in such catholic view, it is all well and good; let them then come in legitimately for their proper share of respect. But it ought to be plain "unto all men diligently reading holy scripture and ancient authors," we think, that the grand weight and burden of the question concerning the nature of the church rest not at all on these distinctions, and that to put them therefore ostensibly in any such form must ever smack of pedantry, and betray a poor and false sense of what this question means. All turns here on the *idea* of the Church, and this not only may, but must be settled to some extent in our minds, before we can go on to discuss to real purpose the divine obligation of Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, or any other polity claiming to be of such necessary force. Is the idea of a really supernatural constitution under this name, as it once universally prevailed, a sober truth still for Christian faith, or has it become a dangerous though beautiful *fiction*? That is the question; the first and most fundamental question here, before which the whole controversy about bishops and elders, liturgical forms and free prayer, becomes of only secondary account. For it is the answer we give to this question first of all in our minds, that must determine the sense of what we contend for at other points, or show it to be worth contending for one way or another. What is a *jure divino* polity, whether Episcopal or Presbyterian, or a *jure divino* system of rites and ceremonies, for a church that shrinks from proclaiming *itself* divine, and that has no faith practically in the supernatural character of its own constitution, as anything more than that of the American Tract Society or any other outward league of evangelical sects! In this view it is, that the question of sacramental grace is more profoundly interesting, than the question of episcopacy. It goes much nearer to



the heart of the main question, the grand ultimate subject of controversy and debate ; for the sacraments are the standing sign and seal of whatever power is comprised in the Church ; and as we think of this, so invariably also will we think of them ; the one conception giving shape and form always directly to the other. But even here the right church sense is something more general and deep, than the right sacramental feeling. The notion of grace-bearing sacraments, sundered from the sense of the Church as still carrying in it the force of its first supernatural constitution, would be indeed magical, and must prove quite as pedantical in the end as a supreme regard for bishops in the same dead way. We must believe in a divine church, in order to believe in divine sacraments, or in a divine ministry under any form.

The feeling of this enters deeply into the Anglican movement ; forms we may say the very soul of it ; and is extended by means of it also far beyond the movement itself, with new and unusual force. This we take to be a great benefit, whatever may be thought of Puseyism, or of the tendency it shows just now to pass over to full Romanism. Be its issues as they may, the question here agitated is in itself of the most vast and solemn import, and we have reason to be thankful that it is thus carried from the mere outworks to the inmost citadel of the cause in debate. This Anglican controversy, and most of all we may say the form it is now taking as an open reconsideration of the controversy with Rome, is in itself and for Protestantism something far deeper than the strife for Episcopacy in the usual style of past times ; no such strife, as holding simply between Episcopacy and Dissent, deserves to be considered of any real account in comparison ; and we may well be glad, that both Episcopalians and Dissenters are now in the way of being forced to see and confess this more and more. The controversy here has to do, not with the accidents and circumstances of Protestantism only, but with the very foundations of its life ; and we rejoice to believe accordingly, that it is fast turning into impertinence, for thoughtful men everywhere, the agitation of the church question in every lower view.

It cannot be denied again, that the course of this controversy, as thus reaching to the very heart and soul of the church question, is powerfully sifting and trying the ecclesiastical pretensions of the English Establishment as a whole. These proceed on the old catholic doctrine of the Church, and claim to be in harmony with it throughout. But the near and close competition in which it is now placed with Romanism, is causing it to appear

in a very different light. Think as we may of the aggressive movements of this last, in themselves considered, it must be confessed that so far as mere general *principle* is concerned the Catholic cause carries with it a better show at least of reason and right than that to which it is so daringly opposed. First in view is the high and solemn question of ecclesiastical supremacy, the true and rightful headship of the Church and its legitimate relation to the State. Who can doubt, but that the ground here taken by Cardinal Wiseman, and the Romanists in general, is of a higher character than that occupied by Lord John Russel and the English Establishment? On one side, the civil power is made to be the fountain of ecclesiastical authority; on the other, this authority is taken to be of an order wholly distinct from that of the State, independent of it, and for its own ends above it—derived originally from Christ, and having its seat perpetually in the spiritual kingdom of which he is the glorious though now invisible head. Can there be any question, which of these two views is most honorable to religion, most congenial to faith, most in harmony with the New Testament, most true to the authority of past history? It has been a great reproach to English Protestantism from the beginning, that it put the King into the place of the Pope, and referred all church offices and functions to him as their ultimate source. For refusing to acknowledge this royal supremacy in the affairs of the church, the Roman Catholics have been subjected in past times to persecutions and penalties, which those who are forever harping on the theme of Protestant liberality, as contrasted with the bigotry and intolerance of Rome, would do well to acquaint themselves with even in a superficial way. In the Establishment itself also, many have felt all along the disgrace and burden of the relation, and have often with feeble voice protested against it or tried to explain it away. But never before probably was there such a glaring exposure of the misery of it, as that which is taking place just at the present time. The whole Tractarian movement has been *against* the notion of such civil supremacy in ecclesiastical matters, in proportion precisely as it involved a revival of church principles generally, and a return to old catholic sentiments and ideas. The Gorham controversy might seem to have been providentially ordered, to bring out in broad caricature and irony the true sense of the farce, when it was sure in this way to receive the most earnest attention. Here, a theological question, not of secondary but of primary consequence—going just now as we have before seen to the very root of Protestantism—is settled in the last instance by purely civil authority; and

the English hierarchy, with his Grace of Canterbury at its head, in the presence of the whole world dutifully succumbs to the insolent and profane dictation! How unlike the spirit of the Third Innocent truly, of Hildebrand, of Anselm, of Athanasius! No wonder the Bishop of Exeter, with such earnestness as he has in his soul, should feel such a crisis. to be tremendously solemn. And now, to set the case in its worst possible light, England beholds in her bosom the sudden revelation of a full Catholic hierarchy, asserting the independence of the church in its own sphere, and taking thus with natural ease the very ground which the Tractarian tendency has been reaching after as necessary and right, but reaching after so far in vain. The contrast could hardly be exhibited under a more noticeable or clearly intelligible form; and it is full of disadvantage to the cause of Anglican Episcopacy.

For let it be kept in mind, what we speak of is not the Papal system as such over against the State system of Queen Victoria and the British Parliament, but the general *principle* merely that enters into this contest. That is capable of being considered and settled without regard to actual forms of administration; and must be so settled indeed, in order to be acknowledged at all in any true way. It is a very important question certainly, whether the headship of the visible church shall be taken to reside in a General Assembly, or an Episcopal Convocation, or a Pope; but of still greater importance than this, because back of it and under it in the order of truth, is the question, whether the church shall be allowed to have any such headship of its own at all, or be regarded as a mere branch and dependency of the civil government, like the judiciary, the army, or the marine. This is the question, on which issue is now joined by the Catholic and State Church parties in England; and we have no right to close our eyes to the true significance of the principle involved in it, merely because it may seem to go in favor of Popery here, as they call it, and not in favor of Protestantism. The exodus of the Free Church of Scotland has been widely glorified, as a grand exhibition of martyrdom for the very principle now in view, the independence of the church in church matters, the "rights of King Jesus," as the Scotch phrase it, in opposition to all worldly political power whatever. The fountain of ecclesiastical law and order, the true and proper primacy in matters of religion, was loudly proclaimed in this case to be, not the British throne or parliament, but the supreme judicatory of the church itself; and in defence of this principle, the best men of Scotland, with Chalmers at their head, showed themselves ready

to brave, if need were, the greatest penalties and pains. Puseyism too has gained credit deservedly, for only seeing clearly, and saying plainly, that the civil supremacy in matters of religion is an abuse, at war with every right conception of the church, and for proposing, though thus far only in a weak and ineffectual way, a return to the old doctrine of ecclesiastical independence; and for all right minded men certainly, the Bishop of Exeter just now, by even the partial stand he is trying to make for this doctrine in the midst of the universal defection from it that surrounds him, is a spectacle of more moral dignity than the Archbishop of Canterbury, with the whole bench of bishops besides at his back, truckling in base subserviency to the nod of the civil power. And why then should we refuse to see or own the same moral significance, in the controversy between the Queen and the Romanists? In their own way these last claim the right, (indefeasible in its own nature and now solemnly guaranteed also by the British laws,) to render unto God the things that belong to God, and to carry out the full idea of a church, without dictation from Cesar or dependence in any sort on Cesar's will. But against this, Lord John Russel and the great majority of the English nation loudly and violently protest—calling it Papal aggression, a violation of the proper liberties of the country, an attack on the Queen's supremacy; as though it were not by act of Parliament years since settled, that allegiance to the Pope in things spiritual is perfectly compatible with the acknowledgment of this supremacy in things political, full as much as allegiance to the General Assembly of Scotland. The principle of the controversy thus is clear and plain. And so far as this is concerned, we say, the right is with the Catholics, and the wrong glaringly and grossly on the other side. We sincerely admire for our part the firmness and constancy of the Irish hierarchy in the case of the Government colleges, and the calm intrepidity displayed in the organization of the new hierarchy for England; and only wonder that so many otherwise sensible people should have no power apparently, through the mist of their prejudice against Popery, to look upon the matter in the same light. Let Popery be never so foul and false, in itself considered, it is still something great, in this age of mechanism and sham, to find a large body of men thus solemnly committing themselves on its behalf to the old catholic principle, (very apostolical too, as it strikes us, both in sense and sound,) that powers and rights ecclesiastical, come not from kings or civil parliaments, but from the divine constitution of the church itself upheld and maintained by the perpetual presence of its own head. There can be no

question in this issue, which side answers most impressively to the true ideal of the old church life, as it comes up to our minds when we think of such men as Cyprian, Athanasius, Chrysostom, Ambrose, or Augustine. There is a moral majesty in the present position of the Pope's hierarchy both in Ireland and England, which, poor and mean as it may outwardly appear, has the effect just now undoubtedly of casting a very sensible shade on the Queen's hierarchy, in spite of all its pomp and wealth. Why should Wiseman not stand as high here at least as Chalmers? Who among the Anglican bishops or archbishops can be said to present anything like the same imposing and sublime figure?

But the issue here is not simply as between two hierarchies, the one culminating in the Pope and the other in the Queen, in the form now stated; it goes beyond this to the universal question of religious liberty, the right of men to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience, the principle of church toleration in the broadest sense; and in this view it concerns directly all sects and parties on the outside of the Government church, no less than the membership of this favored communion itself. Is it not the pride of the age, to be considered liberal, enlightened, tolerant in matters of religion? Is not this in particular the boast of Protestantism? Above all is it not the boast of English Protestantism, whether in Great Britain or in these United States? Has not England moreover only a few years since, after ages of most unrighteous persecution, solemnly *emancipated* her Catholic population, and admitted them to a gracious comprehension in this grand privilege of the nineteenth century? But how now does the case before us comport with all this; in which the first movement of the Catholics to carry out in earnest their own ecclesiastical polity, is met with noise and clamor from one end of the nation to the other, and mob and parliament and church-by-law-established are summoned angrily to unite for the purpose of putting it down! Thus ends the farce of toleration and freedom. One can hardly help being reminded by it of Pharaoh's liberality to the Israelites, when he graciously allowed them to go abroad for the worship of Jehovah, but at once set terms and bounds again to his own grant which made it no better than a hollow pretence. The liberty comes just to this: "You may live and serve God as good Catholics, provided only you consent in doing so to hold your ecclesiastical rights and privileges as a fief in fief from the English crown, and do homage for them accordingly, as is done by the regular government church, to her Majesty the Queen, as

true *Pontifex Maximus* of the British realm." Pagan Rome in the first ages, and the Persian Monarchy in the fourth and fifth centuries, might easily have been reconciled to the church on the same Erastian terms. But no true Catholic of course could so part with the substance of his faith, to be thus graciously tolerated in keeping the name of it afterwards and its mere empty shell. Say what men please of it then, the contest now going forward in England, between the Papal and Royal interests, is in truth a contest for religious freedom and the rights of conscience; and the fact is not to be disguised, that in this view, according to the established Protestant doctrine of the nineteenth century—the age of light, the flower of all ages—the wrong is palpably and egregiously on the Protestant side. This is so plain indeed, that the main body of the English nation itself, it seems to us, must soon be ashamed of its false position, and quarrel with its own passion for so upsetting the fair and even tenor of its way. It is only strange that the universal interest of Dissent should not at once have been prepared, to make common cause openly in such a case with the *persecuted* party—so far at least as the principle of religious toleration is concerned. A most curious commentary it is certainly on the reigning song of this class in particular about "freedom to worship God," the inalienable rights of conscience, &c., to find not only the Independents, Baptists and Methodists, of England, but the Presbyterians also of Scotland, holding up their hands for the royal supremacy in matters of religion against the Catholics, while yet professing to disown it for themselves. And what is if possible still more remarkable, even the Puritanism of this country, with all its antipathies for Episcopacy and law religion, is led by its still greater hatred of Popery to lean visibly in the same direction—as though in the presence of this Medusa's head the memory of Plymouth Rock itself should turn to stone! The doctrine of freedom to worship God according to his private judgment and conscience, and without dictation from the State, is good it seems for every fanatic who chooses to act the part of pope or pontifex maximus separately in his own behalf; but it is *not* good for such as acknowledge any such primacy in the Roman Catholic form. The question comes to this in the end; and is it necessary to say, that under such form it wears just now a very bad face, not only for the Protestant Episcopal church in England, but for the cause of Protestantism in general.

It amounts to nothing to say, that the Catholics are themselves constitutionally intolerant and exclusive, and therefore deserve

no toleration from Protestants. *That* is not the true modern doctrine of toleration—to allow the rights of conscience and “freedom to worship God” only to such as could be trusted to do the same thing, if they had full power in their hands. Tyrants reign and kill on precisely the same maxim. Protestantism is bound here to take the measure of its conduct from itself, and not from abroad, from its own theory of Christianity and not from any that may be held by others.

But Romanism is to be excepted from the law of universal toleration, we are told, on another account. it involves allegiance to a foreign power, and in such view is politically unsafe and so unworthy of trust. The settlement of a religious constitution under such form in the land, not holding as such from the British throne but from the Bishop of Rome, is taken to be an aggression, an invasion of the Queen's right, which looks finally to treason and revolution, and fully justifies accordingly the most stringent action on the part of the Government to put it down. We have sometimes heard the same cry of the *Republic in Danger*, on this side of the Atlantic also, to get up a crusade against the Catholics, though the trick is happily waxing now rather stale and grannyish for much effect. The whole plea we hold to be perfectly idle and false. It is not upheld by either reason or history. No part of the English nation has shown itself—even through water and through fire, the persecution of the nation itself, almost forcing it the other way—more true to the government, more loyal and patriotic and worthy of trust in all respects, than just the body of whom we now speak. Nor has there ever yet been given in this country the shadow of an occasion, (other than the noise made by alarmists themselves,) for apprehending the least danger to our civil institutions; and for ourselves, we say it plainly, we believe the acknowledgment of the Pope's spiritual primacy is just as little at war with a true American spirit, and carries in it just as little peril for our American liberties, as the acknowledgment of any like primacy in either of the Presbyterian General Assemblies, or in the American Episcopate, or in the private judgment simply of any true blooded Puritan Independent, who holds himself at liberty, if need be, to brave on the plea of conscience all human authority besides.

But into this question it is not necessary to enter at length in this place. What we wish to urge is, the wrong that is done practically to the Protestant cause itself, let the case be as it may with regard to the political character of Romanism, in supposing that this cause may not be left to take care of itself, even where



it has every outward advantage on its side, but is to be cared for only by a system of wardship and police, in which the free action of mind is to be as much as possible forestalled and forced into a given form. The genius of Protestantism, we are told, is not *lucifugous* like that of Rome; it seeks the light, has large trust in common sense and an open Bible, and asks only a clear field and fair play to get the better of Romanism in a short time even in France or Italy itself. Romanism indeed is so absurd as well as wicked, such a dark mass of fallacies and fooleries and vile abominations, that it might seem to have no chance of standing a moment in any such unequal contest, unless under cover of some such Egyptian darkness as brooded formerly over the Middle Ages. But now in the case before us the conditions of this trial are all against it, and in favor of the antagonistic cause. The Protestantism of England is not in its infancy, but of full age and growth, with its roots reaching out in every direction into the soil of the national life. It has learning, and wealth, and vast moral respectability, on its side. The government is in its hands, with boundless patronage and power. What can such a cause fear, thus inwardly and outwardly strong, from an interest so poor and weak and vile as the *thing* called Popery? One might suppose the English nation would only laugh at any show of serious competition, on British ground and in the middle of the nineteenth century, proceeding from such a quarter. And yet, strange to say, the simple erection of a Roman hierarchy, which can never be of more force than the mind and will of the people allow, has been sufficient to throw the nation into a sort of wild panic. There is a solemn self-contradiction in this, and what might seem to be an involuntary confession of weakness, which to the mind of an earnest Protestant, on either side of the Atlantic, can hardly fail to carry with it a somewhat portentous look. And it only makes the matter worse, when piety here turns into patriotism, and affects to be concerned—not just for any peril into which religion may be brought by so contemptible and barefaced an enemy—but for a future and distant peril of the State. This supposed political danger all depends of course, at the same time, on the *growth* of Romanism far beyond its present bounds; and such growth in England can come only by the activity of the British mind itself, exercised on the problem of the two opposing systems under the full meridian blaze of modern knowledge, with an open Bible and all sorts of outward force besides to stem the movement; in which case it would seem as if it must have some *right* to prevail, if a people have any right ever to think for themselves

or to follow their own mind. But the conservative humor of which we now speak, with all its faith in Protestantism, its huge contempt for Romanism, and its high opinion of Anglo-Saxon intelligence and common sense, is by no means willing after all to trust things in this way to their natural course. England must not have the opportunity even of making a fool of itself by turning Catholic, though this should take place with never so much intelligence and freedom. If a man is likely to become a maniac, and in that state to commit suicide, his friends think no harm of chaining him for his own good; and just so here, in view of this possible fit of Romanism and the farther possibility by it of political self-destruction, it is held to be wise and right to clap a strait jacket on the patient forthwith, for the benevolent purpose of keeping him in safety from his coming self. The imagination of John Bull is terribly frightened with the chimera that he is in danger of losing his senses, that his mind is not safe in his own care and keeping; and he comes to the sage conclusion, that the best thing he can do to avoid so deplorable a catastrophe is to part with his mind altogether, to put it into the hands of his own Prime Minister, the British Parliament, the Anglican Bishops, or anywhere in short that may seem fit, only so as to be fairly rid of it himself and in no peril thus of becoming crazy.

What a Circe after all this Popery must be, if the full grown Protestantism of England in the middle of the nineteenth century, with all sorts of patronage and prejudice to back it, may not be allowed to meet the hag or look her fairly in the face, even on its own soil, for fear of being bewitched by her sorceries into the similitude of a swine.

And how kind of the popular spirit now happily in the saddle, which is so well assured of its own sanity and can see this danger afar off, to break through its usual cant of free inquiry and free speech, its favorite cry of liberty and light, and to invoke the strong arm of power for the suppression beforehand of any and all workings of British mind that may look this way.

We have the same spirit in this country, officiously concerned to persuade the American people that Romanism is at war with the idea of a Republic, and that to guard against the danger of itself turning Catholic in time to come, and so by its own free choice committing political suicide, the part of wisdom is now, in obedience to the counsels of this far seeing and profoundly patriotic school, to forestall and cut off the exercise of all freedom in any such form, or in other words, by putting out the

light in season, to save the weak eyes first and then the weak life of the nation.

Seriously, we say, the cause of Protestantism is wronged, the cause of Romanism powerfully complimented, by every concession which implies in this way that there is any danger of an enlightened people, at this time of day, with its eyes open and its hands unbound, being led deliberately to exchange the boasted beauty and perfection of the first for the supposed ugliness of the second, at the cost of losing besides its most cherished privileges and institutions. Such extreme sensitiveness to danger, such spasms of morbid jealousy and fear, where the foe at the same time is represented as so poor and silly, so loathsome and vile, so miserably decrepit and weak, is to our mind we confess one of the most uncomfortable symptoms in the case of Protestantism at the present time. Why should a very ordinary Address of Archbishop Hughes, on its *Decline*, set so many angry pulpits and presses in motion, all over the land, to prove that it is in the full zenith of its prosperity? Why should our evangelical papers, of every denominational hue, feel it necessary to let no week pass without at least two or three squirts of foul water cast towards Rome, when on their own showing it were quite as wise to do battle in the same style with the Grand Lama of Thibet? Why should this English demonstration, which if Protestantism is to be believed in its own favor, deserves to be counted little better than some outbreak of Bedlam, have power nevertheless apparently to move the heart of the Queen of England, and the heart of her people, "as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind?" It would tell vastly more certainly for a cause that takes itself to be so good and strong, over against one that is reproached as rotten to the core and ready to fall to pieces by its own rickety weight, if it could only afford to enjoy this happy feeling of such vast superiority in a calm and quiet way, and with some corresponding self reliance and self-possession. Why should the bellowing of a Roman bull disturb, even for a moment, the serenity of the British lion?

The truth is however, that there is real room in the whole case for uneasiness, not just because Romanism may be seen to have power, but because Anglicanism is felt to be weak. The constitutional deficiency of this system, its want of ability to assert and carry out in full the proper functions of a church, is in the way of being exposed as never before by the progress of the present crisis; and so searching has this become in its operation, that there is now good reason to expect that it will lead in due time to the breaking up of the Establishment altogether.

It is becoming more and more difficult for the two tendencies it carries in its bosom, to move in any sort of union together; and we are not surprised to find that which still makes earnest with catholic truth leaning powerfully towards secession, whether it be to form a new body or to fall into the arms of Rome. The secessions which have already taken place in this last form, are exceedingly significant. No movement of the sort equally grave has occurred since the Reformation. The importance of it lies not just in the number of the converts, though this is serious enough; but in their character rather, and the circumstances of the change. Newman was the greatest theologian in the English church, and next to him probably Archdeacon Manning. The converts generally have been men of learning and piety, filling prominent stations and connected with the best families. Of their great moral earnestness, the step they have taken is itself the strongest proof. It has been well remarked that every one of them must have gone through a process of fiery probation, of which the world generally can have no conception, to break in such style with his whole previous existence, and pass over through all sorts of sacrifice to his new position. Every single conversion in such circumstances is a true *martyrdom*, in the full sense of the word. No single case of such martyrdom can ever pass without weight; and in such a time of crisis especially as the present, a hundred cases of the sort coming together must be allowed to carry with them a truly startling and awakening power. It is only the perfection of insipidity to pretend indifference to the fact, in the old world or in the new. The fact itself however, as is well known, is but part of a much wider and still more serious fact. It is no more than the beginning probably of a great church-slide, which is destined soon to shake the whole world with its thundering sound. Nearly two thousand ministers at least are reported as holding ground with regard to the Queen's supremacy, and the late governmental settlement of the question of baptismal regeneration, which will hardly allow them to stay much longer with a good conscience in the Government church. It is difficult to see how Bishop Philpotts can avoid going along with the movement. Such an exodus, whether it may lead at once to Rome or not, must be followed with still more failing of heart and confusion of mind in the Establishment, and with such palpable self-contradiction before the whole world, that it will have no power finally to uphold itself even in form against the forces that are at work on all sides for its overthrow.

In this way it is that the crisis before us, as we take it, is bring-

ing the pretensions of this Established Church to such a course of fiery trial as it has never been called to pass through before ; and the result of the trial is sure to be, that Anglicanism will be found wanting, having no power to make good its own high sounding promises and claims. It is some instinctive apprehension of this, we doubt not, that excites it so much just now against the so-called Papal aggression. With all its superiority of patronage and wealth, and Protestant prejudice to boot, Anglicanism very plainly is afraid to meet Romanism on fair terms, before the tribunal even of the Anglican mind itself. It virtually confesses judgment, and condemns itself by its own verdict. It must either give up the church doctrine altogether, and so fall down openly to the level of the lowest Puritanism, or else be led by it to proclaim itself the sham only of what Romanism has the show at least of being in fact ; and either horn of such a dilemma is " sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit." Hard enough it is of a truth, in such circumstances, to be calm and quietly self-possessed. But the exposure is only aggravated by the want of power to meet it in this way. The style in which both parties in the Establishment, High-church and Low-church, allow themselves too generally to rail at Romanism and the late conversions, is anything but dignified or rational, and must in the end rebound with righteous retribution on the credit of their own cause.

It is easy enough to see moreover, that Episcopalianism in general, even as it exists among us here in America, is sorely tried also by this Roman movement in much the same way. It has had already a few secessions of its own, and cannot help feeling at the same time that the secessions in England, and the assumptions that go along with them on the side of Rome, strike directly at the very root of its own life. Hence we have no small display of the same sort of blustering petulant humor that is at work in England ; which however tells all the more badly here, in the case particularly of the high toned church party, that it contrasts so strangely with the bland liberality towards "our Roman sister" which was in vogue in this quarter only a few years since, and finds besides not even an inch of ground on which to build its pretensions in the political constitution of the country. In such circumstances it argues anything but a strong sense of truth and right, anything but real faith in a *jure divino* title, to fall upon nicknames and all sorts of unfounded scandal, the missiles always not of reason but of irrational passion, for the purpose of fighting off the opposite cause.

It is ridiculous for Anglicanism to claim an exclusive right to this country, over against Romanism, unless it be on the ground that this last has lost all church character, and that Anglicanism accordingly is the only true Catholic succession—ground which in fact this communion does not venture to take. What a farce then to talk as if Romanism *here* in America, (whatever it may be in England where Queen Victoria is the fountain of all church unity and life,) could have no right to exist, and must be held only an apostacy and *schism* if it dare to exist, on the outside of the Episcopal communion! “Perverts,” apostates and schismatics, all are taken to be, who fall away from this communion, whether it be to the side of Geneva or of Rome. It sets itself up thus for the one holy catholic church of these United States, out of which on either side there is no salvation. But why then should this same Anglicanism not go to France, or Spain, or even Rome itself, and there play off the same pompous pretence? By what right political or historical does it claim precedence here in such high handed style, that would not be of equal force in Italy or Austria? Why should the true and only valid ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Maryland for instance, originally settled as it was by Catholics, be taken to lodge now in the hands of the excellent Bishop Whittingham only, and not in the See of Baltimore made vacant recently by the death of the no less excellent Archbishop Eccleston? The question may be answered different ways; but let the answer go as it may, it will be found to bear hardly on the cause of exclusive Episcopalianism, involving in one view a great deal too little as in another a great deal too much for its hierarchichal claims. In this way, if we are not greatly mistaken, the present course of events is serving to unfold the weakness of such Episcopacy far more than its strength. The stream of the church question, so easy to wade through seemingly at first, is fast getting too deep for the legs of this system to touch bottom, and it must either swim beyond itself or sink. Plainly it has no power to give a satisfactory response to the problem of a truly Catholic Protestantism, the last and deepest interrogation of the present time.

It affords us no satisfaction to come to this melancholy conclusion. We would feel it a great relief rather, to be able to find in Anglican Episcopacy a truly rational and solid answer to the problem of which we speak, an Ararat of rest for the ark of Protestantism, so long drifted by any and every wind over what has been thus far a waste of waters only without island or shore. For most firmly are we convinced, that no *other* sect or fragment of the general movement carries in itself, as such, the power and

pledge of any such rest, or is ever likely to prove hereafter more than a weak approximation at best, on the most narrow and partial scale, to the true ideal and proper perfection of its own cause. The whole reflection is suited to make one sad. But it is still a gain always, to have fallacies exposed and delusions brought to an end; and in this view, as we have said before, there is reason to rejoice at what seems to be taking place in the ecclesiastical world, in the way of historical judgment and dissolution, by the winnowing process that has now begun. It is a great matter to have subordinate issues thrown back on their deepest and last ground, in such sort that men may be compelled to deal with this in a really wakeful and earnest way. So it is coming to be now more and more with the question concerning the true sense of Protestantism, and its right to exist, over against the pretensions of the Church of Rome. There are difficulties in Protestantism, which are not to be settled by the common issues between its sects, let the decision here go as it may. These need to be acknowledged and seriously looked in the face, in order if possible that they may be surmounted or set aside. To make no account of them, is only to make them worse. It is well therefore that the course of history is forcing the world to their solemn consideration, and causing it to see that the right settlement of them calls for something deeper and better than any of the schemes that are now paraded as sufficient for this end.

The day of mere outward tradition here, and blind passive trust in authority, is fast passing away. The mind of the Protestant world is in the course of being roused more and more, to a full revision of the first principles and primordial elements of its own life. What is the real meaning of its *protest* against Rome? Was it in truth, though not so meant at first, a complete rupture with the idea of the Church as it stood before, a full casting off of the old sense of this mystery as it was held for faith in the first ages; in which view Puritanism becomes right, and the best course for ending difficulty would be undoubtedly to give both Episcopacy and Presbyterianism to the winds, and fall over at once in mass to the cool latitude of Baptist Independence; or is it essential to Protestantism still to carry in it the sense of divine powers, and to assert them in the form of true sacraments and keys that are taken actually to open and shut the kingdom of heaven? And in this last case, can Anglicanism as it now stands be trusted to bear the whole weight of what is thus required, as being under Protestant form, by reason merely of its ecclesiastical machinery, what no Protestantism besides has any power to be under a different shape? And if no



such trust be found to stand, is there no help save in a return to Rome; or may the whole cause of Protestantism be supposed to carry in it the promise of a better future, in which it shall be brought to leave all these difficulties behind, by passing forward to a new and higher position that shall be both Catholic and Protestant at the same time? These are the deep questions that are coming home silently to the inmost heart of the age, by the church agitations of the present time; and so far have thought and doubt been stirred already with regard to them, that we hold it altogether idle and vain to think of a quiet and contented return hereafter to any past habit as in itself conclusive and sufficient. The past is not thus sufficient for the cause of Protestantism, in any part of the world. To say of it that it is so in any of its forms, is only a very bold or else a very ignorant lie; and no such lie now can long satisfy the mind of the age.

The Anglican crisis in this way involves far more than at once appears on its face. It is undermining confidence in much that has heretofore had a show of truth and strength, writing *Tekel* upon it, and turning it for the consciousness of men into mockery and sham. How far this reaches already, or where it shall reach hereafter, no one can tell. One thing is certain; the way is opening for a new revival of infidelity in England, in close connection with the latest and worst form of German rationalism, which is likely to go beyond all that has appeared there under this name before, and which can hardly fail to be felt powerfully also on this side of the Atlantic. It is remarkable too, that this alarming development seems to run in some measure parallel with the revival of the church tendency, as though it formed its natural alternative and reverse. It has entered the Universities, both Cambridge and Oxford. Puseyism in some cases has fallen over, with easy somersets, to sentimental Straussism. The movement includes a brother of *Froude*, and a brother also of *John Henry Newman*. To some, this connection may seem to be an argument against the church tendency; but in truth it is an argument in its favor; for darkness in the moral world follows light always as its shadow, and through the corruption of man's nature what is good is every ready to call forth what is bad, may even to recoil seemingly itself at times into such conclusion, as a sort of Mephistophelian satire on its own beginning. Nor is it at all difficult to see, in the case before us, how the very same need in the course of religious thought, which urges some to lay new stress on the mystery of faith, may throw others into the stream of unbelief, or carry the same persons indeed first in one direction and then in the other. Let the foundations of a reign-

ing creed or habit in religion begin to give way, and there must be of necessity a movement on the part of such as think at all, towards either a more consistent supernaturalism or else a more clearly conscious rejection of the supernatural altogether. This, we doubt not, is just the relation that exists between the revival of infidelity, and what some take to be the revival of superstition, at the present time in England. Both tendencies in truth grow forth from the same ground; both argue the insufficiency of the established tradition, the breaking up of its authority, and the felt necessity of finding for the mind a surer and better resting-place. Both go in this way to show the truth of what we say, in regard to the far reaching character of the religious movement which is now at work. It cannot pass as a mere transient and partial excitement, to be followed by a full relapse afterwards into the old order of life and thought. The hollowness of this has been too far disclosed, all real faith in it is too far gone, to allow any such re-settlement under more than a factitious and hollow form. Politics and the interest of trade may prevail to bring back for a time such a reign of order in Warsaw; but it will be a reign at the same time of violence, of indifference and conscious sham, opening the way certainly to new and greater revolutions in time to come. The idea of the Church must become practically far more than it has been for English Protestantism, or it will inevitably become far less. And this alternative is comprehended itself in a more general issue, which will be found of force finally for the Protestantism of the whole world.

To some it may seem possibly, that putting the matter in this form is equivalent to a full surrendry of the church question in favor of Rome. If it were so, we ought not to shrink certainly from the confession of clear and open truth, just for the sake of avoiding that consequence. Whether we choose to see it or not, the crisis now noticed is solemnly at work, and is sure to lead in the end to its appointed judgment and result. Protestantism must render a plain intelligible answer to the challenge:—"Church or No-church—Sacramental or Non-sacramental—Fidelity to the mystery of the ancient creed, or broad and full rupture with it as the opening revelation only of the Man of Sin?" We will not bear the thought of this answer falling the wrong way, to the side namely of a purely Gnostic naturalism, substituting its own spiritual common sense for the proper mysteries of faith; for that would amount at once to a sentence of condemnation on the whole cause of Protestantism, as complete as any its worst enemies could wish. The problem is then,

How shall the demands of the old Catholic faith be satisfied in true union with Protestant freedom? And for this, we say, no sufficient solution is found in the existing state of Protestantism, as any one may see who is honest enough to look at the matter earnestly with his own eyes. Not in the system as a whole; for it is intrinsically at war in such form with the whole conception. Not in any one part or section of it separately taken, whether in Europe or America. Can any thinking man seriously persuade himself, that Presbyterianism, under any of its multiplying constitutions, or Methodism, or American Lutheranism, or such chaos as now represents the notion of the church in Germany, carries in it the last sense of Christianity, and is in the way of solving hereafter the full burden of its awful riddle for the world's universal use? Can this be hoped of Anglicanism, or such Episcopacy as we have from this source in our own country? The times are working out a negative reply, in tones that are too loud to be overlooked and too clear to be misunderstood. Anglicanism can never cause itself to be accepted, with general faith, as in and of itself an adequate solution for the great church problem of the present time. These we say are *facts*, which we have no right to blink, let them lead where they may. The ostrich changes no truth, by simply plunging her own silly head into the sand. A cloud of arrows shot into the air may darken for a moment, but have no power to put out, the keen light of the sun.

There are however not simply two general alternatives here, but we may say four. The first is a deliberate giving up of the sacramental system altogether, the only proper end of which—short of parting with the Trinity and the Incarnation—is Baptist Independency, the extreme verge of unchurchly orthodoxy. The second is full despair of Protestantism, and reconciliation in form with Rome, as we have it exemplified with thrilling solemnity in the present English secessions. A third way of escape may be sought, in the belief or hope of a new miraculous dispensation on the part of God himself, through some special agency armed from his presence with fresh apostolical commission and corresponding powers, such as may supersede at once both Romanism and Protestantism as systems that have become historically powerless and dead. Swedenborgianism plants itself on this ground; and it is the ground taken also by Irvingianism—a far more respectable and significant birth of the modern church life than many, having no insight into its natural history, are disposed to allow; not to speak of the wretched caricature we have of the same tendency in Mormonism, which

also in its own way claims to be a revival in full of the otherwise lost gifts and powers of the apostolic age. A fourth and last resort is offered, the only one it seems to us which is left for the thoughtful, in the idea of historical development; by which, without prejudice to Catholicism first in its own order and sphere, or to Protestantism next as a real advance on this in modern times, though with the full acknowledgment of the faults and views of both systems, it is assumed that the whole present state of the church is transitional only and interimistic; and that it is destined accordingly through the very crisis which is now coming on—not just by a new miracle setting aside the whole past as a dead failure, but in the way of true historical progress, which makes the past always the real womb both of the present and the future—to surmount in due season the painful contradictions, (dialectic thorns,) of the Protestant controversy as this now stands, and so to carry it triumphantly forward to its own last sense, (the type neither of St. Peter nor of St. Paul but of both rather as brought together by St. John,) in some form that shall be found at the same time to etherealize and save, in the same way, the last sense also and rich wealth of the old Catholic faith.

One of the most interesting and richly suggestive books that have appeared in our times, is Thiersch's *Lectures on Catholicism and Protestantism*, (*Vorlesungen über Katholicismus und Protestantismus von Heinrich W. J. Thiersch*, son of the distinguished grammarian of this name, and professor of theology in the University of Marburg).<sup>1</sup> Through this whole article we have had it more or less in our eye, though it takes no reference directly to the course of things in England; and it is not impossible that we may make it hereafter the basis of another article on the same general subject, in the way of carrying out still farther the momentous discussion to whose threshold we have now come. It detracts not at all from the interest of the work in question, that its highly accomplished and most amiable author, since the first edition of it was published in 1845, has been led to adopt the third general answer, just stated, to the great question of the age, by espousing the cause of the Irvingites, which strangely enough has won for itself in Germany quite a number of converts. This fact rather only goes to show the more affecting the trying nature of the subject, and the deep earnestness of the man. The frivolous and superficial not seldom find all

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<sup>1</sup> Author also of the best work we have ever seen on the Canon of the New Testament. a. 1845, in opposition to the destructive criticism of the Tübingen school.

easy, where the truly serious in proportion it may be to the very amount of their knowledge itself are brought into the greatest straits. No one can question the learning of Thiersch; it is of the very highest order. And just as little room is there to question his piety and profound practical sincerity. He wrestles with the problem of his book evidently, not merely as a theoretic scholar, and much less as the organ merely of a theological party, but as one who feels that issues of life and death are suspended for himself and for the world on its proper solution. No one can follow him, without feeling that the subject is full of embarrassment, as well as big with importance, and that it is regarded throughout by the lecturer himself, whatever it may be for others, with intense interest and concern. When we hear of such a man seeking refuge from the difficulties of the church question, by falling in with the belief that nothing less than a new apostolate, sent forth with fresh commission directly from Christ himself, can restore Christianity to its proper form, and that such new apostolate has in fact appeared of late among the Irvingites—we may be well assured that there is here truly a *nodus vindice dignus*, that the difficulties in consideration are neither few nor of light account, and that to meet them properly is a task which calls for more than common earnestness in any part of the world. It is hardly necessary for us to add, that we have no sort of faith in the solution of the knot in this way. No scheme can command our regard, which nullifies virtually the doctrine of the indestructible life of the church, as well as the Divine promise on which that doctrine rests, by assuming a full failure and frustration of all the sense the church had in the beginning. We have no patience on this ground with that bald Puritanism, which fairly buries the church for a thousand years and more, in order to bring it to a more striking resurrection in the sixteenth century. As little can we be satisfied, on the same ground, with the visions of Emanuel Swedenborg; they proceed throughout on the assumption that the church as it started with the Apostles has run itself out, both as Catholicism and Protestantism, and that the world is to be helped now only by a new revelation appointed to take its place. Irvingism involves more or less distinctly, as it seems to us, the same dismal thought; and if this be so, it needs no other condemnation. If it come to a necessary choice between such a view and Romanism, the advantage lies decidedly we think on the side of this last. It is easier to believe that the original powers of the church still flow in this communion, though hidden for the most part from our common Protestant sight, than it is to suppose that they have

perished entirely, and now need a "*Lazarus come forth*," or a second edition of the word "*On this rock*," to come once more into full play for the salvation of a dying world. But, as we have seen, we are not thrown at once on any such desperate election. We may cast ourselves upon the theory of historical development, so as to make Protestantism itself, with all its painfully acknowledged miseries, the main though by no means exclusive stream, by which the general tide of the original Christian life is rolling itself forward, not without fearful breaks and cataracts and many tortuous circuits, to the open sea at last of that grand and glorious ideal of true Catholic Unity, which has been in the mind of all saints from the beginning.

It is but fair to add in the case of Thiersch, for whom we entertain a more than common affection and respect, that he is by no means unhistorical in his own mind, but altogether the reverse; and that so far as the objection here noticed has any weight, it is to be regarded as holding by implication only against the system, in whose plausible meshes he has allowed himself to be recently caught. His theory agrees in many respects with the scheme of historical development; only he counts it necessary to include in this the idea of such a failure of the first life of the church, as makes it necessary now that it should be called forth again from the grave as it were of its own past history by a second supernatural gift of the same sort.

J. W. N.

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### MAYER'S CHURCH HISTORY.<sup>1</sup>

THE title of this work is not to be judged exactly from the contents of the volume here offered to the public. It belongs rather to the whole plan, of which in the mind of the excellent author the present volume was intended to be only the threshold or vestibule. The history of the Reformed Church of Germany, in the strict sense, belongs to a later period, which it would have been necessary to take up in a separate volume, had the author been spared to execute his full task. As it is, the work before us is a History of the Swiss Reformation, and this only in part; for it does not come down even as far as to the death of Zwingli, but stops short with the posi-

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<sup>1</sup> *History of the German Reformed Church.* By REV. LEWIS MAYER, D. D. Late Professor of the Theological Seminary of the German Reformed Church in the United States. To which is prefixed a *Memoir of his Life*, by REV. ELIAS HEINER, A. M. Minister of the First Reformed Congregation in Baltimore. Volume I. Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co. Pp. 461, 8 vo.

tion into which things were brought at the close of the year 1525. On this first chapter of Helvetic Protestantism, however, it contains much that is not to be found in ordinary church histories, at once both interesting and instructive. The book is brought out in very handsome style. Mr. Heiner's Memoir of Dr. Mayer appeared in the last number of our Review; and we cannot do better now perhaps, in bringing the History itself before our readers, than to present in full the brief *Preface* with which it is introduced from the same hand.

#### PREFACE TO DR. MAYER'S HISTORY.

One of the greatest events which ever occurred among mankind, was the Reformation at the commencement of the sixteenth century. For a long time, the grossest abuses, both in Church and State, had everywhere prevailed. The pope had audaciously assumed the supremacy belonging to Deity himself, in spiritual matters; and now he assumed the supremacy in worldly matters also, giving the kingdoms of the earth, far and near, to whom he pleased. This completed in his person the character of "Antichrist, sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself as God." To such lengths in blasphemy and wickedness did he proceed, that he sold *indulgences to sin*. Making use of the power which his predecessors had usurped over all Christian churches, he sent abroad, into all kingdoms, his letters and bulls, with ample promises of the full pardon of sin and eternal salvation to such as would purchase the same with money. The cup of his iniquity was now full. God raised up ULRICK ZWINGLE and MARTIN LUTHER, to check the Man of Sin in his impious course, and to beat back the fearful tides of corruption which were now sweeping over the earth and deluging the church. Enlightened by the word and Spirit of God, they began to cleanse the church from the pollutions and abuses of popery, and to spread abroad among the people the blessed knowledge of the word of God. As the truth spread far and wide, tens of thousands were subdued by its power, and whole churches, and whole communities, and, at length, whole nations, awoke from their long spiritual sleep, and were led to rejoice in the great salvation of the Scriptures. The event of the Reformation produced a new and glorious era in the church and in the world, and its beneficial results will be felt by mankind, to the latest age. Whoever, therefore, largely contributes to the better understanding of its origin and progress, may be regarded as a benefactor of his race.

The volume which is herewith offered to the public is a complete and an ably written history of the Reformation in Switzerland, the birthplace of the church, as reformed by Zwingle and



his able coadjutors. It is generally known that the reverend author was engaged in writing the history of the German Reformed Church, and that the first volume, embracing the origin and progress of this church,—and, incidentally, of the Lutheran, Dutch Reformed, and Presbyterian churches also,—was ready for the press. For some years, this important work has been anxiously expected. Except D'AUBIGNE and EBRARD, no church historian, it is believed, has done justice to the noble Swiss reformers, and to the people whom they converted, under God, from the abominations of popery, and organized into comparatively pure Christian churches. Neither their character nor work seems to have been properly understood. The want of a good history of the German Reformed Church, in the English language, has long been felt; and it is, therefore, gratifying to know that the work before us is supposed to answer well the demand in question. Among other things of interest and importance, it does ample justice to ZWINGLE, BULLINGER, ŒCOLAMPADIUS, BUCER, and, indeed, to all the great and distinguished men who originated, and carried on with so much ability and success, the glorious reformation in Switzerland. At the same time, it does full justice to LUTHER, MELANCTHON, CALVIN, and others, in its notices of the reformation in Germany, France, and other countries. All denominations of Christians, but especially the churches of the Reformation, will read this work, it is believed, with pleasure and profit. The high origin and deeply interesting history of the German Reformed Church are here brought fully and clearly to the view and consciousness of the reader.

The second volume of the work, designed to embrace the history of the German Reformed Church in the United States, is not fully written out, and will have to be completed by another hand. Much time and great labor have been expended on it, and the history making thus far perhaps three hundred pages, comes down to about the year 1770. A great portion of the material for the remainder is collected, and partly arranged. The Synod of the German Reformed Church, at its late meeting in Martinsburg, Va., recommended the completion of this volume, and also the publication of the one now offered to the public.

The author was not permitted, in the order of Providence, to witness the publication of the work, upon which the last years of his useful life were expended, but his own memory is embalmed in the annals of the German Reformed Church. Whilst he rests from his labors, the influence of his work will be perpetuated by this valuable contribution to the history of the church which he loved and served during a long life devoted with patient self-denial to its best interests, and to which, in death, he has bequeathed a legacy that will be appreciated by all candid Christians.

*Baltimore, Md.*

E. H.